

lead, in America and with our allies, an international coalition to root out ISIS.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

The majority leader.

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL OF A RULE SUBMITTED BY THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, pursuant to the provisions of the Congressional Review Act, I move to proceed to S.J. Res. 24, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval of a rule submitted by the EPA.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 294, S.J. Res. 24, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of a rule submitted by the Environmental Protection Agency relating to “Carbon Pollution Emission Guidelines for Existing Stationary Sources: Electric Utility Generating Units.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion is not debatable.

The question occurs on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the joint resolution.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (S.J. Res. 24) providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of a rule submitted by the Environmental Protection Agency relating to “Carbon Pollution Emission Guidelines for Existing Stationary Sources: Electric Utility Generating Units.”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to the Congressional Review Act, there will now be up to 10 hours of debate, equally divided, between those favoring and opposing the joint resolution.

The Senator from West Virginia.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. President, I rise to speak in support of my resolution of disapproval under the Congressional Review Act against EPA’s greenhouse gas regulation targeting existing power sources.

I am so proud to be here with my colleague from North Dakota Senator HEIDI HEITKAMP. We have 47 cosponsors on this bipartisan effort to stop the ex-

isting coal plant rule. We have had a lot of discussion about this. It affects all of our States differently, but I think it is important to talk not just about what this does to our individual States but what this is going to do to us as a country.

If the administration’s proposed Clean Power Plan moves forward, hardship will be felt all across the country. Fewer job opportunities, higher power bills, and less reliable electricity will result. West Virginia and other coal-producing States, such as Kentucky and Wyoming, are feeling the pain of prior EPA regulations. Nearly 7,000 WARN notices, or notifications to employees—let me ask, does everybody know what a WARN notice is? If you have gotten one, you will never forget it because basically what a WARN notice says to that employee is that you could be laid off within the next 60 days.

In West Virginia, 7,000 of those notices have gone out to West Virginia families, West Virginia coal miners, in the year 2015, and more than 2,600 of those were just issued last month alone. Our neighboring State of Kentucky—the State of the majority leader—lost more than 10 percent of its coal jobs during the first quarter of this year.

Kentucky’s coal employment now stands at the lowest level since the 1920s. The Energy Information Administration’s most recent annual coal report for 2013 showed that the average number of coal mine employees dropped by roughly 10 percent in other coal-producing States, such as Alabama, Utah, and Virginia.

According to the Mine Safety and Health Administration, coal mining employment nationally has dropped by a massive 31 percent in just the last 4 years. If you travel to the State of West Virginia—particularly our coal area—it does not take you long to see that. The impact of this war on coal extends far beyond the coal industry. These regulations are affecting all aspects of Americans’ lives. Last month, West Virginia’s Governor announced that most State agencies would have to endure 4 percent cuts, largely because of shrinking energy tax revenues. For the first time in many years, the Governor cut our education budget in the State of West Virginia because of this war on coal. That means less money for roads, for schools, and for health care services, but the terrible impact that prior regulations have had on West Virginia and the Nation would get far worse if the EPA’s Clean Power Plan goes into effect.

The Clean Power Plan is the most expensive environmental regulation the EPA has ever proposed on our Nation’s power sector. Compliance spending is estimated to total between \$29 billion and \$39 billion per year. Household spending power—the money American families have in their pockets—will be reduced by \$64 billion to \$79 billion by this rule.

A new study by NERA, a respected economic analysis firm, of the final rule found that electricity prices in West Virginia would increase between 13 and 22 percent, but certainly West Virginia will not be alone, as we are going to hear through this debate, in enduring higher energy prices and job loss. NERA projects that all of the lower 48 States will see their electricity prices go up under the Clean Power Plan. As many as 41 States could see electricity prices increase by at least 10 percent. That is just from this regulation. I am sure my colleague from North Dakota represents one of those affected states. Twenty-eight States would see electricity prices that would increase by at least 20 percent.

What does that mean for our economy? The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association found that a 10-percent increase in electricity prices could mean a loss of 1.2 million jobs across the country. Half a million of those jobs would be in rural communities in rural States such as West Virginia and North Dakota.

The National Black Chamber of Commerce found that the Clean Power Plan would increase poverty among blacks by 23 percent and poverty among Hispanics by 26 percent. Affordable energy matters, especially to those living on fixed incomes. Households earning less than \$30,000 a year spend an average of 23 percent of their income on energy costs. These families, these children, these workers, these elderly are the ones who will suffer most under this administration’s policy.

Energy reliability also matters. Coal is the source of our baseload generation, and the administration wants to replace coal with intermittent sources. What does that mean? That means that on a hot day, when the air-conditioner is running and factories are operating, we could be confident that a coal-fired powerplant will be supplying the energy needed to cool our homes and keep our businesses running.

In the cold winter of 2014, when the demand for electricity surged, coal was the energy source utilities relied on to keep people warm. Renewable sources—and we want more. We want more variable ones and more frequent ones. Renewable sources are an important part of our country’s energy mix, but there are always going to be days when the wind isn’t blowing and the Sun isn’t shining, and it is critical we preserve more reliable energy resources to meet the demand of powering our economy.

Where I would like to see us go is innovation. Innovation, not across-the-board regulations, should be our focus, but these regulations will not spur innovation. The Clean Power Plan sets a standard for new plants that cannot be met by the most commercially available technology we have today. That not only flies in the face of the Clean Air Act but also makes gradual improvements in technology that would improve our environment impossible implement. The effect will be to instead choke off our most reliable and

affordable source of energy and devastate the livelihoods of many folks around this country.

Prior to this administration, our country did a laudable job of protecting and improving our environment while promoting economic growth. Last week marked the 25th anniversary of the 1990 Clean Air Act amendments, which were signed into law by President George H.W. Bush and supported by Senators across the political spectrum. Our air is now the cleanest it has been in decades. We continue, and we must continue, to reduce harmful pollutants such as sulfur dioxide as our energy consumption increases and our population grows.

Since 2005, U.S. carbon dioxide emissions have fallen by 13 percent. According to the EIA, West Virginia has emitted 19 percent less carbon dioxide since the year 2000. We should continue on this track. We should continue to protect our environment but not at the expense of our families, our communities, and our economy. I am serious when I say, if you come to West Virginia, you will easily see this.

With this rulemaking, the EPA is attempting to impose the same type of cap-and-trade system that Congress rejected 5 years ago. Having failed at its attempt at cap and trade, the administration has taken a second bite at the apple by claiming authority under the Clean Air Act to impose a regulatory cap-and-trade program. That is not the way it should be. This raises an obvious question. If EPA had cap-and-trade authority, as the administration is asserting now, why did the administration go to such lengths to try to pass cap-and-trade legislation? The answer is clear. The Clean Air Act does not authorize a mandatory cap-and-trade program. With its Clean Power Plan, EPA ignores 40 years of history and prior regulations that consistent with the law, always based standards on controls installed at an existing plant.

Let me be clear. In the 40-year history of the Clean Air Act, EPA has never issued an existing plant program quite like this. As one EPA official summed it up to the New York Times, “The legal interpretation is challenging. This effectively hasn’t been done.”

Rather than regulating existing plants using the best technology, EPA is instead attempting to regulate the entire energy grid. This has not been done before because the Clean Power Act does not authorize EPA to do this. Both States and the private sector are doing what they can to fight back over this overreach.

West Virginia is 1 of 27 States that has filed lawsuits to block this rule. Additionally, 24 national trade associations, 37 rural electric cooperatives, 10 major companies, and 3 labor unions representing over 800,000 employees are challenging the EPA’s final Clean Power Plan.

In less than 2 weeks, international climate negotiations will begin. The

world is watching to see whether the United States will foolishly move forward with costly regulations that will do virtually nothing to protect our environment.

Under the Congressional Review Act, the Senate now has the chance to take a real up-or-down vote on whether the EPA’s Clean Power Plan can and should move forward. This is a legal binding resolution that if successful will prevent the Clean Power Plan or a similar rule from taking effect.

Passing this resolution will send a clear message to the world that a majority of the Congress does not stand behind the President’s efforts to address climate change with economically catastrophic regulations. Passing this resolution will also demonstrate to the American people that the Senate understands the need for affordable and reliable energy. Congress should pass this resolution and place this critical issue squarely on the President’s desk. America’s economic future is at stake, and it is time to send a clear signal that enough is enough.

I am very privileged to be offering this resolution with Senator HEITKAMP from North Dakota. She has been a champion on this issue. She has a different energy mix in her State and different energy concerns, but I think it goes to the heart of North Dakotans and West Virginians about the economic impact of such a very far-reaching and untried regulation in an area that is so far-reaching. I thank the Senator for her steadfast support. It has been my pleasure to be working with Senator HEITKAMP.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, I want to express my great thanks to my colleague from West Virginia, Senator CAPITO, who has been absolutely a champion on this issue, but also a champion on looking at new technologies and a champion to actually see what we can do moving forward with the great innovation that is the history of this country and the history of coal country.

If you look over the life of the Clean Air Act, you will see literally billions of dollars of investment in cleaner energy, billions of dollars of investment in pollution control, billions of dollars of commitment to the environment by the industries we represent, whether it is a utility industry that has an interesting resource mix that includes coal or whether it is those facilities that utilize the energy looking at energy efficiency.

The numbers that Senator CAPITO gave you in terms of America’s achievement on reduction of CO₂ happened without any involvement or any interference by the Environmental Protection Agency.

North Dakota’s situation is unique as it relates to the Clean Power Plan rules, and that is why North Dakota filed its own separate piece of litigation because we have a different story

to tell, I believe, a story that involves lignite, which isn’t the coal that is mined in West Virginia, but it certainly, for those of us in the center of the country, has become an important fuel source for a generation of electricity for generations.

When you look at it and you think about where we are with fuel sources, you remember that there was a period of time when utility companies in this country were told you cannot use natural gas to generate electricity and, as a result, billions of dollars of investment were deployed to find a way to have a redundant, reliable, and affordable source of energy, and that redundant, reliable, and affordable source of energy was coal. Now things have transitioned. North Dakota is truly all of the above as it relates to our energy resources in this country and providing the electricity and the reliability of our electricity in the region.

When we look at where we are right now, we have created an incredible level of uncertainty for utility companies in this country. What do I mean by that? If you are sitting as a member of the board of directors in a utility company right now and know you are going to have baseload growth moving forward, how do you build out your resources to meet the demand, which is required by our regulatory environment? Now you are told: Look, by this year, those of you in North Dakota have to reduce your CO₂ output by 45 percent. Guess what. The original rule, as drafted, had an 11-percent reduction, and now we are up to 44 percent. In what world is that an appropriate leap as we move forward in terms of looking at compliance with this new regulation? The EPA is not authorized to issue rules that are impossible. The baseline and fundamental principle of both the Clean Air Act and the Clean Water Act is about using the best available technology—what is actually there and commercially available in that space. I have sat down with people who run utility companies in my State, and they have told me it is virtually impossible. Not only do we have a rule that is impossible, but we have an issue that I think the good Senator from West Virginia talked about that is even more serious. We have one agency of the Federal Government not empowered by any law in this country basically controlling our energy deployment, our electrical deployment. We have ignored FERC, and we have ignored all the other agencies that are responsible for the transmission of electricity.

If you look at the history of this country and compare our history with many of our competitors across the world, the one thing we do better than our competitors is our reliable electricity. No matter what time of the day it is, you can reach over and turn on a light switch in the United States of America and the lights come on.

If you are building a new manufacturing facility and need new energy,

that energy is made available to you. Having electricity deployed at the end of the mile in my State, which can be as remote as another 20, 30 miles away from anyone else is a miracle. That is really a miracle of the commitment we have made to make sure we have power in America. This rule jeopardizes that commitment. This rule is wrongheaded and it is a dramatic change from the draft rule, especially as it relates to the State of North Dakota. This rule represents an attitude that says: We don't care what the law says. We don't care that you have rejected cap and trade. We don't care that you have rejected a carbon tax. We are going to unilaterally adopt those public policies as public policies in America. I don't think any of that should happen. I think it is time that we push back at all levels.

As I said many times on the floor, whether it is the waters of the United States or the Clean Power Plan rule, the challenge we have is trying to do what this Congress is responsible for doing, which is to legislate. It is not to have a fight about whether we like the EPA or not. It is not to have a fight about whether this rule is right or not. It is about the appropriate public policy. When we simply leave it to the regulatory agencies, we end up with litigation and uncertainty for those people sitting in the boardroom who have a critical responsibility for delivering power in the United States of America.

I gladly join my colleague from West Virginia as we pursue this matter. I think we all know that this legislation will likely pass. We also know what the likely outcome will be once it reaches the President's desk. We need to continue to have these conversations. We need to continue to talk about what the consequences are, not just for the coal miners in West Virginia and North Dakota but for the redundant, reliable, and affordable delivery of electricity in our country.

With that, I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I listened to every word as my friend spoke, and I respect the words from my colleague from West Virginia very much, but I just want to be clear. I could not disagree with them more. Why would the majority leader and my friends push for the overturning of a Clean Power Plan rule that will, in fact, save lives—that is a fact because when the air gets cleaner, you save lives—and will also protect our planet from the ravages of climate change? I don't know why they would take that stand. I really don't. When we are sworn in here, above all we are supposed to protect the health and safety of the people of our Nation, not protect one utility over the other. That is the private sector. We are here to protect lives and to protect the planet. I am going to go into depth as to why I feel this is very wrongheaded.

I particularly have great respect for our majority leader. Senator McCONNELL has the power to bring anything before the body that he chooses. That is his right, and he has done that. But I must question this—given what happened in Paris and the need to keep America safe: Why are we going after the Clean Air Act today? It doesn't make sense. We should be moving to the omnibus budget agreement. We should be looking at every part of that budget to make America safe.

For example, in the EPA budget, we could look at ways to improve chemical safety and how to protect our reservoirs. We could look at the Department of Homeland Security and how we can step up security at our ports, airports, border checkpoints, and railroads. We could look at funding biometrics, which could help us fight against homeland terrorism.

In the State Department, we could look at ways to enhance security at our embassies and consulates. There is a lot of talk about Benghazi, Benghazi, Benghazi, but the Republican budget cut embassy security. How about looking at that? Why don't we look at the Office of Personnel Management and look at ways we could boost our cyber defenses after one of the largest data breaches in our government's history. The Department of Justice needs to make sure the FBI and local law enforcement have the resources they need to keep our families safe.

I compliment everyone who came to the table and got a universal agreement on the budget for the next 2 years. Why are we looking at repealing a Clean Power Plan rule instead of taking up that budget agreement and looking—in a bipartisan way—at every single agency that we fund to make sure they are doing everything to keep America safe?

I was talking to one of my colleagues from New York, and he pointed out that the terrorists have been after us since 9/11. So we know we have been doing something right. Let's look at what we are doing right and see if there is anything we are not doing right. Let's beef it up and make sure that our refugee policy is the right policy. We have a lot of work to do, but, no, here we go again.

Just 2 weeks ago Senate Republicans led an attack on one of our Nation's landmark environmental laws, the Clean Water Act, and we defeated them. Now they are back again, and this time they are against clean air. They are attacking the Clean Air Act and the President's commonsense proposals to address dangerous climate change. Of course, most of them don't even believe climate change is happening. They say: Well, we are not scientists. That is right; you are not. So why not listen to the 98 percent of scientists who know this is happening?

The Senate is considering at least one Congressional Review Act resolution, and the one we are talking about now has to do with existing power-

plants. Senator CAPITO has introduced that legislation that would block the Clean Power Plan for existing powerplants from going into effect. This is dangerous. It is dangerous because we would be throwing out the first rules to reduce carbon pollution for powerplants that emit 31 percent of our Nation's total carbon emissions. If we are ever going to attack the problem of too much carbon pollution, we have to go to use our powerplant side, and I commend the President for his courage and for doing the right thing.

I have heard colleagues say that the process wasn't good. What more do you want? The process used to develop these rules was extremely open and inclusive. The EPA met with State officials and a broad range of stakeholders. They held 600 meetings for the Clean Power Plan alone. How many more meetings do they want—1,000? The EPA received more than 6 million comments from the public on both the existing powerplant rule and the new powerplant rule.

Senator McCONNELL's resolution to block the standards for new powerplants and Senator CAPITO's resolution, which we are talking about now, to block the Clean Power Plan would not only toss out these extensive outreach efforts, but the hubris of this is that this resolution would prohibit the Environmental Protection Agency from ever undertaking similar rulemakings, leaving no plan in place to address carbon pollution from this source. Let me repeat that. Not only does this resolution toss out this rule that would clean our skies, but they say that we can never do it again. This is an attack on the American people.

I remind my colleagues that the EPA is setting these carbon pollution standards not because they decided one day to go after the coal companies. They did not. They are doing it because under the Clean Air Act, they have to do it. It is an authority they have that has been confirmed by the Supreme Court. I don't know if my colleagues want to hear this, but I am sorry, because I will repeat it: In the Massachusetts v. EPA case, the Supreme Court found very clearly that carbon pollution is covered under the Clean Air Act. George W. Bush fought it for 8 years. He fought it for 8 years, but the Supreme Court wrote the following in their decision: 'Because greenhouse gases fit well within the Clean Air Act's capacious definition of 'air pollutant,' we hold that EPA has the statutory authority to regulate the emissions of such gasses.'

All that talk about how the EPA is overreaching and that carbon isn't dangerous and you don't have to fix it is so much baloney. The Court found it straightforwardly in Massachusetts v. EPA in 2007. Following that decision, the Obama administration issued an endangerment finding showing that current and future concentrations of carbon pollution are harmful to public health and welfare.

Once that decision is made, we have to act. We can't make believe this planet isn't endangered. We can't make believe pollution from powerplants does not cause problems for our people. We have to act. The administration is well within its rights. If they did not act, they would be sued, and they would lose because they have to protect the people from too much carbon pollution. It is required under the Clean Air Act and was sustained by the Supreme Court in 2007. Not only do the Republicans oppose standards for old plants, but they even oppose standards for newly constructed plants. Both of these resolutions—both of them—are harmful to public health and the environment, and many groups oppose them.

So I am going to show my colleagues some of the groups that oppose this Republican resolution, and America can decide whom it wants to stand with. The Republicans want to overturn the Clean Air Act rule, or these people.

How about public health groups—the Allergy and Asthma Network, the American Lung Association, the Public Health Association, the Thoracic Society, the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, Children's Environmental Health Network, Health Care Without Harm, Trust for America's Health. That is as American as apple pie. These are the people who stand up and protect our health and the health of our families. Whom do we want to stand with—the Republicans, who are pushing this on us on a day when we should be making America safe from the terrorists, or these groups?

Business groups: the American Sustainable Business Council, Business for Innovative Climate and Energy Policy, and Environmental Entrepreneurs.

Consumer groups: Center for Accessible Technology, Citizens Action Coalition, Greenlining Institute, National Consumer Law Center, Ohio Partners for Affordable Energy, Public Citizen, TURN, the Utility Reform Network, Virginia Citizens Consumer Council, the Washington State Community Action Partnership, and A World Institute for a Sustainable Humanity.

Latino groups—why do they care? Because a lot of times they live in communities that suffer from filthy air. The abc Foundation Green Forum, Citizens Energy, the City Project, Common Ground for Conservation/America. There are more Latino groups. It goes on and on: Emerald Cities Collaborative, GreenLatinos, Ideas For Us, Latino Coalition for a Healthy California, National Hispanic Medical Association, National Latino Evangelical Coalition, solar Four.

I will just mention a few environmental groups: Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments.

Could I just say, if we were to ask people "Whom do you trust more—the Senate or the nurses?" dare I say the results? I would guess it would be 99 percent in favor of nurses as opposed to us. And why don't we listen to them?

They don't want to see these rules overturned.

Appalachian Voices, Arkansas Public Policy Panel, Center for Biological Diversity, Clean Air Task Force, Clean Water Action, Climate Parents, Conservation Voters for Idaho, Conservation Voters for South Carolina, Defenders of Wildlife, Earth Justice, Elders Climate Action, Environment America and 24 State affiliates, and Environmental Advocates of New York. It goes on.

These groups whose names I am reading oppose this action by my Republican friends because they want clean air, they want to protect their families, and they want to fight climate change.

Environmental Justice Leadership Forum, Environmental Law Policy Center, Health Care Without Harm, Interfaith Power & Light and 28 State affiliates, League of Conservation Voters and 7 State affiliates, Maine Conservation Voters, Montana Environmental Information Center, Natural Resources Defense Council, New Virginia Majority, PDA Tucson, PennEnvironment, Physicians for Social Responsibility, Protect Our Winters, Rachel Carson Council, Sierra Club, Southern Environmental Law Center, Southern Oregon Climate Action Now, Union of Concerned Scientists, Virginia Organizing, Voices for Progress, Western Organization of Resource Councils, Wisconsin Environmental, World Wildlife Fund.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a list of groups that oppose this rule change be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

GROUPS THAT OPPOSE S.J. RES. 23 AND 24

PUBLIC HEALTH GROUPS

Allergy and Asthma Network, American Lung Association, American Public Health Association, American Thoracic Society, Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, Children's Environmental Health Network, Health Care Without Harm, Trust for America's Health.

BUSINESS GROUPS

American Sustainable Business Council, Business for Innovative Climate & Energy Policy (BICEP), Environmental Entrepreneurs.

CONSUMER GROUPS

Center for Accessible Technology, Citizens Action Coalition, Citizens Coalition, Greenlining Institute, Low-Income Energy Affordability Network, National Consumer Law Center, NW Energy Coalition, Nuclear Information and Resource Service, Ohio Partners for Affordable Energy, Public Citizen, Public Utility Law Project of New York, TURN—The Utility Reform Network, Virginia Citizens Consumer Council, WA State Community Action Partnership, A World Institute for a Sustainable Humanity (A W.I.S.H.).

LATINO COMMUNITY GROUPS

The *abc Foundation Green Forum, Citizen Energy, The City Project, Common Ground for Conservation/America Verde, Dewey Square Group/Latinovations, EcoRico Entertainment, LLC, Emerald Cities,

GreenLatinos, Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, IDEAS for Us, Latino Coalition for a Healthy California, League of United Latin American Citizens, MANA—A Latina Organization, Mi Familia Vota, National Hispanic Medical Association, National Latino Evangelical Coalition, PolicyLink Center for Infrastructure Equity, Sachamama, SolarFour, Voces Verdes.

ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS

350.org, ActionAid USA, Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments, Appalachian Voices, Arkansas Public Policy Panel, Center for Biological Diversity, Clean Air Task Force, Clean Water Action, Climate Action Alliance of the Valley, Climate Law & Policy Project, Climate Parents, Conservation Voters for Idaho, Conservation Voters of South Carolina, Defenders of Wildlife, Earthjustice, Elders Climate Action, Environment America and 24 state affiliates, Environmental Advocates of New York, Environmental Investigation Agency, Environmental Justice Leadership Forum on Climate Change, Environmental Law and Policy Center, Environmental and Energy Study Institute, Environmental Defense Action Fund, Health Care Without Harm, Interfaith Power & Light and 28 state affiliates, International Forum on Globalization.

KyotoUSA, League of Conservation Voters and 7 state affiliates, League of Women Voters, Maine Conservation Voters, Montana Environmental Information Center, Natural Resources Defense Council, New Virginia Majority, PDA, Tucson, PennEnvironment, Physicians for Social Responsibility and 4 state affiliates, Polar Bears International, Protect Our Winters, Rachel Carson Council, Sierra Club, Southern Environmental Law Center, Southern Oregon Climate Action Now, The Climate Reality Project, Union of Concerned Scientists, Virginia Organizing, Voices for Progress, WE ACT for Environmental Justice, Western Organization of Resource Councils, Wisconsin Environment, World Wildlife Fund.

Mrs. BOXER. So we can see clearly—and I think the letter from the American Sustainable Business Council makes a very important statement:

History shows that smart clean energy policies are good for our environment, our economy, and business. We urge you . . . to oppose both resolutions to disapprove the established safeguards.

Another letter from many of these leading public health organizations—quote:

Please make your priority the health of your constituents and vote No on these Congressional Review Act resolutions. . . .

I find it very hard to comprehend that a majority of this Senate, led by my Republican friends, would side with the special interests above the people who simply want to breathe clean air, who simply want to see us dedicated to the fight against climate change.

These groups understand the importance of taking action to reduce carbon pollution. When we reduce that dangerous pollution from powerplants, the Clean Power Plan will deliver important health benefits.

This is what I hope the American people will understand. This is science. By the year 2030, if we defeat this Republican effort, here is what will happen to our communities: We will prevent up to 3,600 premature deaths, we will prevent up to 1,700 heart attacks, we will prevent up to 90,000 asthma attacks in children, and we will prevent

300,000 missed workdays and school-days.

Why on Earth does anyone want to vote to repeal a rule that will prevent 3,600 premature deaths, 1,700 heart attacks, 90,000 asthma attacks, and 300,000 missed workdays and school-days? Why? The answer is special economic interests. That is the answer. It is a disgrace, a total and complete disgrace. We should be fighting for our families, not for the special interests. These are the cobenefits of reducing carbon. A lot of times we will hear my colleagues say: Carbon isn't dangerous. We breathe it out. It is not dangerous. The fact is, when we make these improvements to the powerplants to reduce carbon pollution, there are cobenefits. These are the cobenefits. They are, in fact, articulated.

The Clean Power Plan will cut emissions from existing plants 32 percent below 2012 levels by 2030.

The other thing is it is going to save \$85 a year on utility bills. So everyone who says that this is terrible and that it is going to raise our energy bills doesn't know the facts.

The Clean Power Plan also includes help to low-income Americans through the Clean Energy Incentive Program, which prioritizes early investment in energy efficiency projects in low-income communities. So if we reduce our use of energy because we are conserving energy, we are using less energy, we are cleaning the environment, and our bills go down. That is what we call low-hanging fruit—conservation.

The American people support efforts to reduce dangerous carbon pollution. According to a League of Conservation Voters poll in August, 60 percent of voters support the Clean Power Plan, while just 31 percent oppose it.

So I have to ask my colleagues, my friends whom I constantly fight with on this, why do you side with the special interests against the people—the people who will benefit from longer lives, fewer sick days, fewer schooldays lost, and fewer asthma attacks? Why? And why do you turn against 60 percent of the voters who support the Clean Power Plan? The only answer I can come up with is they are not really thinking about the majority of the American people; they are thinking about the special interests who call here all the time and push us to do things to help them.

There was another report in January of 2015 by Stanford University. We have all heard of Stanford University. It is pretty well thought of. A lot of my colleagues went there and graduated from there. The Stanford University poll found that 83 percent of Americans, including 61 percent of Republicans, say that if nothing is done to reduce emissions, climate change will be a serious problem in the future. It also found that 74 percent of Americans say the Federal Government should take substantial steps to combat climate change.

Look, all of this furor against these rules doesn't go with the American

people; it goes against where the American people are. As I said, 83 percent of Americans, including 61 percent of Republicans, say reduce these emissions. We have to stop climate change. We already see the ravages around us. We already see climate refugees. We already see extreme weather. It is destabilizing. It is dangerous.

According to the same poll, 74 percent of Americans say the Federal Government should be taking substantial steps to combat climate change. Yes, the President has listened and he has put forward these rules that are substantial steps because the emissions come from these powerplants—31 percent of the carbon emissions. So instead of just standing up here and demagoguing and saying this is horrible and frightening the American people, why not join hands with us and do this right?

My State is a leader in clean energy. We are creating jobs hand over fist. We are doing great in California because we care about climate and we care about jobs, and those things go hand in hand. When we install a solar rooftop, we can't outsource that job, we have to hire someone in our State. That is why we have so much strong support in our State, because we see the results of pushing forward aggressively for clean energy. People are happy about it. They are proud of it. They are doing well. Climate change is real.

We have to take reasonable steps to reduce carbon pollution, as with the Clean Power Plan. And all we see from our Republican friends, God bless them—I am very close with a lot of them—is attack after attack after attack on the environment, attacks against the Clean Water Act, attacks against the Clean Air Act, attacks against the Safe Drinking Water Act.

These resolutions that are coming before us ignore the long and successful history of the Clean Air Act. We heard the same arguments against the original Clean Air Act that we are hearing today. In the 40 years since the Clean Air Act was enacted, our GDP—our gross domestic product—has risen not 100 percent but 207 percent. If we go back to those debates—and I have gone back to them—we would hear the very same voices coming from the very same side of the aisle decrying the Clean Air Act: Oh, this is going to be a disaster. Well, it not only wasn't a disaster, it was a resounding success. And where we export our ideas to the world, clean energy is an area where we are exporting those ideas.

Supporting the Clean Air Act makes good fiscal sense. The benefits of this landmark law, the Clean Air Act, amount to more than 40 times the cost of regulation. Let me say that again. For every dollar we have spent complying with the Clean Air Act, we have gotten more than \$40 of benefits in return.

As I mentioned, my State—I am so very proud of it—we are on a path to meet or exceed our goals of reducing

climate pollution to 1990 levels by 2020, just 5 years from now. That is required in our State—AB 32. By the way, Big Oil and big polluters tried to overturn it on the ballot, and the people said: Go home. We are happy. We like this. We embrace it. And they turned back the millions of dollars spent by Big Dirty Oil, and we won. Clean air won.

We are on the path to achieving our ultimate goal of reducing emissions by 80 percent by 2050. Imagine. During the first year and a half of my State's carbon reduction program called cap and trade, we added 491,000 jobs. So all this fearmongering about jobs lost is so much fearmongering because, guess what, look at my State—491,000 jobs added. And that job creation actually outpaces the national growth rate of jobs. California has been a leader in reducing its carbon footprint, and the United States must take steps to address this threat.

I am just going to go back and read to my colleagues the main prediction of mainstream scientists made many years ago about what would happen if we weren't aggressive on climate.

One, temperature extremes, they said, would be more frequent. NOAA scientists predicted that 2015 would be the hottest year since recordkeeping began and it will displace 2014. So the first prediction by the scientists that temperature extremes would be more frequent has been proven true—2015 will be the highest year on record, and before that 2014 was the hottest year on record.

Secondly, they told us when I took over the chair of the EPW committee—which I regretted having to hand over the gavel to my friend Senator INHOFE, but I did hold it for about 6 years, if my memory is correct. A little over 6 years I had the gavel, but who is counting. The fact is, we called the scientists before the committee. They said temperature extremes would be more frequent. That has proven out. They said heat waves would be more frequent. That has proven out. They said areas affected by drought will increase, and Lord knows the West knows that has been proven. Wildfires would be bigger and more frequent, they said. We know in the West that is true. Tropical storms and hurricanes will be more intense. Just ask New Jersey and New York. There will be more heavy precipitation and flooding events. We have seen that with our own eyes. We have seen cars floating down the streets in Texas. Polar sea ice will shrink. That is a fact. Sea levels will rise. That is a fact. All of these predictions by climate experts have become a reality today.

So I ask my friends, Why are you willing to gamble? Why are you willing to take this gamble and walk away from trying to reduce the ravages of climate change? That is immoral in the face of what we know from the scientists and with what we know from reality in the States. We see all the predictions coming true. The fact is

that climate change endangers the health of our families and our planet. We cannot delay action to reduce carbon pollution.

I thank President Obama for his leadership on this critical issue. These rules are an essential element of the leadership on climate change. There is no doubt about it. At the end of this month President Obama and other leaders will gather to reach an agreement on how all of the nations will work to reduce carbon pollution that is causing climate change. Nearly 160 nations have reduced their plans.

I ask my Republican colleagues that if you don't like President Obama's plan, don't just repeal it, tell us how you would reduce harmful carbon pollution. Tell us how you are going to save all these lives. Tell us how. Explain to us how you are going to prevent 3,600 premature deaths, 1,700 heart attacks, 90,000 asthma attacks in kids, and 300,000 missed workdays and schooldays. Where is your plan? Don't just get up there and say it is going to cost more for electricity, because the fact is, we have a special part of this rule that addresses the costs and will actually save money for consumers because we will push the low-hanging fruit of energy efficiency.

These resolutions will take us backward, prevent us from acting to avert the worst impacts of climate. This Republican initiative is going to endanger the health of millions of our children and families from dangerous carbon pollution and will stop the cobenefits to them from going into effect.

I know we are going to have a robust debate. As I said at the start, I think we ought to be debating the omnibus budget agreement. I think we ought to be debating how to keep America safe from the terrorists instead of figuring out ways to repeal a law that if you are successful, will in fact mean adverse health consequences for our people. We should be debating how to keep America safe today. We are not debating that. I am very sorry about that, and I agree with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle who say they know the end result of this. Yes, there is a majority of people here who are going to vote to repeal these clean power rules. We know that. Yes, we know that will go to the President and, yes, we know the President will veto that and, yes, we know when that comes back we are going to sustain the President. We know the outcome.

Why not get to work on keeping America safe? Go to this omnibus budget resolution, look throughout the budget and see ways we can make sure our people are kept safe from terrorists and, for goodness' sake, while we are at it, keep them safe from pollution. That is something we have in our hands. What is before us today will not keep them safe from pollution, and I look forward to this being rejected at the end of the day.

I thank the Presiding Officer, and I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

TERRORIST ATTACKS AGAINST FRANCE

MR. COATS. Mr. President, I do agree we should be debating what is happening in the world, particularly on the issue of ISIS and its impact not only on America, not only on Europe but on the world, and that is what I intend to do.

We have all witnessed the horrific attacks in Paris and this unprecedented form of evil that we have seen disrupt the lives of free people. All Americans—Republicans, Democrats, Independents—all Americans stand in solidarity with Paris and the French people. This isn't just an attack on Paris. This is an attack on the free world, the civilized world.

Don't just take my word for this conclusion because ISIS has already made such a declaration; that is, we are coming after you. We are coming after all those who don't abide by our messianic message of our purpose in the world to destroy you because you don't agree with us.

Sadly, the tragedy we have seen in Paris reinforces that the battle against terrorism and extremism will not only be fought in the Middle East. The United States and Western nations are dealing with escalating security challenges that cannot be resolved through diplomacy and are not being resolved by the current strategy of this White House.

A headline today in the Wall Street Journal is: "Pressure Grows for Global Response." We, the United States, need to show the world that threats to our principal freedoms are entirely unacceptable. Unfortunately, President Obama continues to fail to provide the American people with the leadership we so desperately need.

Consider his response yesterday to the tragic events in Paris versus the response of the French President. The French President, Francois Hollande, said: France is at war. We are in a war against jihadist terrorism, which is threatening the entire world.

I want to repeat that: France is at war. We are in a war against jihadist terrorism, which is threatening the whole world.

Virtually at the same time, President Obama, in a shockingly dismissive tone, doubled down on his so-called strategy to deal with this global threat. What has his strategy to date accomplished? Well, ISIS has expanded into more than half a dozen countries. They are not contained as the President said. Ask the people in Paris if ISIS is contained. Ask the people who have been subjected to attacks inspired by ISIS across the world: Is ISIS contained? I don't think so.

Time after time, the President has shown he simply doesn't get it. In 2012, he boasted Al-Qaeda was on the path to defeat. In 2014, he dismissed the Islamic State as the "JV team," saying that ISIS "is not a direct threat to us nor something that we have to wade into."

Last Thursday he said, "I don't think [the Islamic State] is gaining strength" and saying "we have contained them."

What will it take for this President to wake up and see what is happening around the world as a result of the ever-expanding threat of ISIS terrorism? The President did say yesterday that if people have other ideas to bring them forward. So what I would like to do is offer a few suggestions for the President to consider. In fact, I actually brought forward suggestions over a year ago, but of course none of them have been accepted or acted upon by the President that I am aware of.

When I first addressed this subject in the summer of 2014, I outlined several areas in which urgent action was required. First, and more important, I called for the administration immediately to articulate a comprehensive plan to defeat ISIS. We have a problem out there. Put a plan together to address the problem and do it in a comprehensive way so we have a goal to achieve and a strategy to work out to achieve that goal. This comprehensive plan has been entirely absent from this Congress and from the American people. What we have seen instead are incremental responses—responses that contradict what the President had earlier said—to events that have taken place behind the curve, not ahead of the curve, too little and too late. I called for efforts to reach out to nations across the globe to work together to defeat ISIS, including working with Islamic states and communities to oppose this outrageous ISIS perversion of the Islamic faith.

I want to say that, again, for those who simply say this is a decision that affects America only, all we are calling for are our boots on the ground, that is entirely wrong. The President should know it, and I think he does know it. I, among many, have called for efforts to reach out to nations across the globe to work together to defeat ISIS, including working with Islamic states and communities to oppose the outrageous ISIS perversion of the Islamic faith.

I called for a diplomatic effort to persuade Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Qatar, and other regions to join with us to resist more forcefully ISIS aggression. Last year I called for much greater security assistance for our potential partners in the fight against ISIS. The United States should move quickly to provide more arms, training, and other requested assistance to Iraqi Kurdistan's Peshmerga forces—proven fighters who are willing to stand up and confront ISIS. They needed our support. They needed weapons from us. They needed training and guidance from us, but they were ready to engage in the fight. I said we also needed to find effective ways to support and directly arm the reliable, vetted Sunni tribes and Sunni leaders in Iraq who are essential partners in combatting ISIS extremism that ultimately are Sunni Islam's greatest threat.

It is true, the question of where have they been, where are they. We need more than just sending a check to cover payment for somebody else to fight a proxy war. We need their engagement. They are in the crosshairs of ISIS. Why haven't they stepped up? Where is the flocking to the center square of town saying enough is enough? Where are the imams saying that this is a perversion of our religion? Where are the people in the crosshairs of ISIS simply rising up together and saying we need to address this?

As I said, we also need to find effective ways to support the Sunni tribes and Sunni leaders. Those efforts have been slow, indirect, and insufficient. I called for us to provide lethal assistance to the Free Syrian Army. The administration's effort in this regard was an absurd \$500 million, multiyear effort to train and arm 40 fighters, most of whom were promptly killed or captured. Yes, I called for increased specialized military action by our own Armed Forces. I, with many others, am willing to stand here and say enough. I have called for increased specialized military action by our own Armed Forces—intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, and special forces—not a massive invasion. This has to be a global effort, as I just talked about. It has to include Sunni nations. It has to include Muslims who believe their faith and their culture is being brutally perverted by ISIS.

It is clear ISIS cannot be defeated without U.S. participation. Nations of the world look to the United States to either have their backs or to work with them to stand side by side. We have capabilities and capacity that other nations don't have. Coalitions cannot be formed without our engagement. Our bombing campaign—this strategy of bombing against ISIS targets—has been far from adequate. There have been an average of just a handful a day, many of which have planes turning around and landing back at the airfield with bombs still attached to their wings because they simply haven't had the kind of targeting and directing to ensure that the rules of combat are confirmed.

Contrast this anemic bombing campaign with the bombing campaign before the first Gulf War, which was several thousand sorties a day. In Bosnia it was several hundred a day. Clearly, our anemic air strategy is not defeating ISIS. Frankly, military history shows that air action only cannot achieve the goal of defeating an enemy.

Lastly, I called on the Obama administration and Congress to reassess our border security and do whatever is necessary to make us stronger. One element of that effort is legislation I introduced earlier this year, a bill that would enact changes to the Visa Waiver Program and provide additional tools to enhance border security—changes that, in my opinion, are absolutely necessary to fill and plug a gaping hole in our border security.

Let me talk about that for a moment. The current Visa Waiver Program allows citizens from several dozen nations to travel to the United States without a visa. They are citizens of these nations. In order to expedite the travel process, we entered into the Visa Waiver Program. That works fine if you don't have a situation like the one that exists today, with ISIS and other forces—Al-Qaeda and others—trying to bring people into the United States, to plant people here to carry out evil acts against American people.

My bill would amend the Visa Waiver Program by tightening existing pre-travel clearance procedures and making them more focused on counterterrorism efforts. We have to now recognize the reality that exists here in terms of abuse of the Visa Waiver Program or the possibility of abuse and inserting terrorists into the United States.

The bill would ensure stricter compliance with information sharing agreements by those countries that participate in the Visa Waiver Program and suspend their participation if they do not come into compliance at a 100-percent level. We can't afford any glitches. We cannot afford 99 percent. We have to go all the way.

The bill would also authorize the Secretary of State to revoke any passport issued to a U.S. citizen who is suspected of engaging in terrorist activities and would update the definition of "treason" to include support of terrorist organizations.

When introducing this, I remember the response: Oh, that is too tough. Nothing is too tough these days to keep Americans safe. We need to implement these provisions that I introduced many months ago, because I believe it is a solution that addresses the real and growing threat of terrorist attacks carried out by individuals with Western passports.

Unfortunately, these things I have mentioned and have introduced earlier have not been adopted in any meaningful way. Now, a year and a half later, we are in a much more difficult position, with ISIS stronger and expanded to new areas and new countries. The threat to us all is comprehensive, multifaceted, and nearly global. It demands a global, comprehensive response.

So I would urge the President to seriously consider these and other proposals, and I would like to mention one other proposal this morning. In addition to what I have previously stated, I believe it is now time to consider whether NATO should take on a vital new mission. NATO responded in Bosnia in 1994 and brought about peace. It can do so again.

When I served as ambassador to Germany for 4 years, I had direct contact with NATO and NATO nations, and I know the accumulation of resources, of training, of capability that is available through NATO, and it is a multi-na-

tion, comprehensive coalition. It can play a vital role in dealing with this terrorist threat.

We need a comprehensive, realistic, articulate plan if we are going to destroy ISIS, and NATO action should be part of that plan, whether or not France invokes the article 5 collective defense provision of the NATO treaty—which I think they should do, and perhaps they will do—which requires all NATO nations to come to the support of and do what is necessary to address a threat to one of the nations. If one of the NATO nations is threatened, we all stand together to deal with it.

Former NATO Commander ADM James Stavridis issued his own six-step plan for NATO engagement and leadership to destroy ISIS, and we should look at that and take it seriously. He suggests NATO should assign one of the major alliance commands to lead the operational planning for forceful military efforts against ISIS in both Syria and Iraq and bring all the alliance resources to bear. In addition, he suggests our NATO allies should be joined in this effort by other non-member European states, such as Sweden and Finland, which are similarly threatened by ISIS terrorism. Most importantly, he said NATO must work creatively to bring in the regional powers, such as the Kurdish Peshmerga, Saudi Arabia, and other Arab states in a broad coordinated effort against ISIS under NATO leadership.

This is the mechanism and this is an organization that is trained, has the equipment, has the capability, and can form the coalition necessary with our Arab friends and neighborhoods—the Saudis, the Sunnis and others—that need to be a part of this if we are going to be successful.

NATO's efforts against ISIS, Admiral Stavridis says, should also include assistance to Turkey—after all, Turkey is a NATO member—to better secure their borders against the flow of jihadists in and out of Syria. This is NATO at its best and is something I think should be seriously considered by this White House as a way of moving forward to develop a coalition to address the great threat we are facing.

Let me now say one other thing, because Admiral Stavridis also suggests the possibility of forming some type of a coalition with Russia. We are seeing a strong Russian response today—last evening—once it was determined and proven the Russian airliner was brought down by a bomb and by ISIS. ISIS has taken credit for it, and ISIS will receive the wrath of the Russian military as a result, in direct contrast to what we have done for attempts on our own people.

I am not a big fan of Putin. I am not a big fan of the current Russia government. I spoke out strongly about Russia's invasion of the Ukraine and the annexation of Crimea, and have strongly advocated for Russia's diplomatic isolation. In fact, I so strongly advocated for it that Russia put me on a

list of seven people who are banned from entering Russia for life. Well, I have been to Russia, and I don't need to go back. So it is no big deal. Apparently it was a big deal to them. But now we are facing an emergency situation.

Russian forces are deployed in Syria. Russian efforts need to be coordinated with NATO efforts, if we go the NATO route. We are already coordinating in terms of some of our flights. As we learned in 1941, national emergencies can create strange bedfellows.

Whatever option is considered, the irreducible minimum is real: determined U.S. leadership. This tragic civil war and escalating terrorist threat have continued and grown much too long without an effective American response. Oh, yes, we have had a response—mostly rhetorical—but clearly a strategy that has not succeeded, and clearly something that is not deterring ISIS from growing stronger and spreading further. It simply has not been effective. So whether it is through NATO, whether it is through a coalition of the willing, vigorous American leadership is absolutely essential for the future of all of us.

In conclusion, let me say this. In 2014, the leader of ISIS, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, said:

Our last message is to the Americans: Soon we will be in direct confrontation, and the sons of Islam have prepared for such a day. So watch, for we are with you, watching.

This is the enemy we are dealing with. This is not some vague threat; this is a direct threat. We have seen how they carry out their direct threats, and we stand in the crosshairs. And, yes, it is very possible and probably very true that they are with us here now, watching, waiting, planning, contriving for another Paris, for another Baghdad, for another attack—hopefully none, but something that could be possibly much greater than what we saw in Paris. They have created their homeland in Syria, but they have told us what we don't want to hear, but which is probably true, that they are here and they are watching and they are waiting.

So the question is, does President Obama grasp what we are up against? Last year he laid out the goal of defeating ISIS, but President Obama still has not put forward the comprehensive strategy to accomplish that goal, and yesterday he doubled down on the same policies that have led to our current foreign policy failures. The effort to defeat ISIS will be successful only with leadership from the President of the United States. Let me say that again. The effort to defeat ISIS will be successful only with the leadership from the President of the United States.

So, President Obama, as Republicans, as Democrats, as Independents, as Americans, we desperately need for you to provide that leadership at this critical time. President Obama, are you up to the job or do we have to wait another year to put a leader in the White House?

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, it is a pleasure and privilege to follow the distinguished Senator from Indiana. His concerns for national security are well established, and I enjoy working with him, particularly in the area of cyber security. But I would note, in the wake of his eloquent remarks about our national security situation, that we are not here on the floor to discuss national security. We are here on the floor right now because the Republican leadership is taking a run at the President's Clean Power Plan.

Paris has not recovered from the devastation of the other day, and we have important bills that the chairman of the Committee on Appropriations has worked very hard on to get ready and that would improve the capacity of our Department of Justice, our FBI, and our Department of Homeland Security to address this threat. Are we on those bills? No. The majority leader has decided we are going to take a run at a climate regulation.

Now, with ISIS and terrorism being the issue of the day, one might think: OK, I can understand why we are going to climate change. We have known for years that our intelligence community, our defense leaders, and the men and women in uniform we count on to protect us have said climate change breeds terrorism. It creates the conditions—the Quadrennial Defense Review and the intelligence reports have said—that spawn the kind of despair that leads to terrorism. It is a catalyst of conflict.

So one might say: OK, sure, it makes sense we should address climate change because it is a catalyst for conflict. And we would find voices—I think the distinguished Senator from Indiana mentioned Admiral Stavridis. We love Admiral Stavridis in Rhode Island because he has been associated with the Naval War College. He has said that the cascading interests and broad implications stemming from the effects of climate change should cause today's global leaders to take stock, and he has said many other eloquent things on climate change too. But we are not here to do something about climate change and help reduce it as a catalyst of conflict. What the majority leader has brought us here to do is to undo American leadership in this area.

One might say: OK, they have a better plan. The Republicans have a plan they think is better than the Clean Power Plan, and therefore they want to foul up the Clean Power Plan so they can put a clean power plan of their own in place. There is no such thing. There is no Republican strategy to deal with climate change. In fact, a majority of my colleagues on that side can't even admit that it is real.

So that is where we are. We are on a measure that clearly won't pass under the Congressional Review Act, clearly will go to the President and be vetoed and be sustained on the veto. So this

will never become law. It is just a big exercise in time-wasting.

While the smoke is still clearing over Paris, we are still engaged in this big exercise in time-wasting. Why? To send a signal. To send a signal to the big coal interests, the big oil interests, the Koch brothers, and the tea partiers that "We are with you." The American public isn't with you. Even Republicans aren't with you. If we look at recent polling, other than the tea party—and by the way, 70 percent in the tea party thinks global warming isn't happening—isn't happening. I don't know whom they are talking to. They are not talking to fishermen in my State. They are not talking to foresters out West. They are not talking to farmers in the Midwest. It is happening. We might go further as to discussing what to do about it, but the tea party is so irresponsible that they think, in a strong majority, it is not even happening. But they are not the ones we should be listening to because 83 percent of Americans—including 60 percent of Republicans—and by the way, with the November elections coming up, 86 percent of Independents say that if nothing is done to reduce emissions, global warming will be a very or somewhat serious problem in the future. So we are now going against what 83 percent of Americans, including 61 percent of Republicans and 86 percent of Independents, would direct us to do, in order to keep the faith with the big coal and oil and Koch brothers industries that fund so much of this operation here.

So 56 percent of Republicans—and 54 percent of conservative Republicans—say that the climate is changing and that mankind is contributing a lot or probably a little to the change. A majority of Republicans now believe there is solid evidence of global warming—again, 56 percent. When we look at young Republicans, this is where it gets very interesting. Young Republicans—under the age of 35—think climate denial by politicians in Congress is "ignorant, out of touch or crazy." That is where young Republicans are on this.

Yet the majority leader has brought us here to interrupt any conversation we might be having over national security, slowing down any progress on the domestic security appropriations bills that might go forward, against the interests of young Republicans and everybody else virtually across the country, all to help out Big Coal, Big Oil, the Koch brothers, and to cater to this small, little tea party contingent, 70 percent of whom don't even believe climate change is happening. There is a point where you can't take views seriously. Frankly, if this group by 70 percent thinks it is not even happening, there is a point where we have to say: Run along, fellows; we want to play with the grownups here who understand what is going on.

So here we are on this bill. I will say that I like to do a little research when

there is somebody speaking on the Senate floor. I thought the Senator from Indiana was going to talk about climate change, so I did home State Indiana, university, and climate change, to see what comes up. What came up was an article published by the University of Indiana that says “Indiana University experts comment on climate change report.” That is the headline. The No. 1 lead under it is “Changing climate will affect Midwest crops, forests, public health.” That is the lead, Indiana University. The second lead is “Report signals need to move away from fossil fuels.” So they get it at the University of Indiana.

Here is the quote: “Climate change, once thought to be a problem for future generations, ‘has moved firmly into the present. . . .’” That was an article from May 6, 2014, more than a year ago, and still we are on the floor fighting about vain and doomed-to-failure efforts to attack the only climate change plan that is out there.

I invite my Republican colleagues: If you have a better plan than the climate plan the President has put forward, let’s hear it. But I am here to say they have nothing—nothing—zero. So bring up that subject if you want. Highlight for the American people that this is a party in tow to coal and oil and Koch brothers’ interests. Highlight for the American people that you are running in direct opposition to what the American people believe, to what even young Republicans believe. I don’t get it, but have fun with it.

The last thing I will mention is this. I am from the Ocean State. I am about to be followed by my distinguished colleague and friend from Wyoming. Rhode Island has a little bit of a different situation. We are on the ocean. This denial business really doesn’t work for us. We can go down to Narragansett Bay and measure that the bay is 3 to 4 degrees warmer, mean water temperature, than it was 30 years ago. That is not just a statistic; that signals the end of the winter flounder fishery in Rhode Island. We used to catch winter flounder. It was a robust crop. It is gone, more than 90 percent wiped out, largely because that warming has changed the ecosystem in which the winter flounders grew. So it is gone. We paid a price for that.

We can go to Naval Station Newport and look at the tide gauge. It is up 10 inches since the hurricane of 1938 came through. Google ‘Hurricane of 1938, Rhode Island.’ Take a look at the images. We got smashed by that hurricane, and now there are 10 inches more water that can stack up with storm surge into an even bigger cocked fist against my State. That is directly related to the warming oceans—unless somebody wants to repeal the law of thermal expansion around here. But I don’t think we get to do that in the Senate. That is one of God’s laws. That is one of the laws of nature.

So our seas are warming, and our seas are rising. We have virtually lost

our winter flounder fishery. We are losing our lobster fishery. We are getting clobbered, and we can’t deny this stuff. The effect carbon has on the oceans can be replicated in a high school science lab. Ramp up the carbon dioxide in saltwater and seawater and it turns acidic. The ocean is turning acidic at the fastest rate ever since humankind has been on this planet.

Go to the western coast and look at a little tiny sea snail called the pteropod, the sea butterfly. God’s evolution has metamorphosed this little snail to having a foot that is actually a wing that swims it through the ocean. It is one of the core species. If we had good ocean sense here, everybody would know what a pteropod was. It is all over the place. It is a huge food source. It is the bottom floor of the food pyramid.

In the study just done, more than 50 percent of the pteropods in the Pacific from California north had severe shell damage—more than half of the species had severe shell damage from acidification of those seas. People in Oregon and Washington have had their oyster farms wiped out as the acidified water came in and ate away the shells of these little creatures. You do not survive long in an environment in which you are soluble, and that is the predicament we are creating for these of God’s species.

Pope Francis said something very simple: We don’t have that right. We don’t have that right. Those pteropods aren’t this generation’s species. They are God’s species. They are the Earth’s species. It is not for us to tell our grandchildren and our great-grandchildren: We don’t care. Go ahead, die right out. We are going to protect our big industry friends. That is just wrong.

We should not be on this bill. This is a time-waster. This is a disgrace. This has no business being here. The American people know better, and that may be the reason we are trying to get off it as quickly as we can. But I am here to say it is not enough to get off trying to knock down our one plan for dealing with climate change; we ought to be thinking about how we enhance wind and solar in Texas, wind and solar in Wyoming, protect the great forests of this country, protect the great shores of this country, and protect the species offshore. We are changing their world on them by making the oceans more acidic than they have been in the lifetime of our species.

I know the Senator from Wyoming is here to rebut everything I have said, but he has that right.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be recognized for 10 minutes, followed by Senator SHAHEEN for 10 minutes, Senator CORNYN for 10 minutes, Senator NELSON for 10 minutes, and finally Senator

MANCHIN for 10 minutes; that following Senator MANCHIN’s remarks, the Senate recess until 2:15 p.m. for the weekly conference meetings, and that the time in recess count against the majority time on the CRA.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, it is fascinating to listen to my colleague and friend from Rhode Island because I have the National Journal Daily printed today. It has back-to-back pages talking about the terror, the horror in Paris. Obviously the thoughts and heartfelt condolences of the people of this country continue to go out to our friends in France, who have stood by us, and we will stand by them.

One page talks about how President Obama has continued to underestimate ISIS. This is in today’s paper, quoting President Obama, saying: “The analogy we use around here sometimes, and I think is accurate, is if a JV team puts on Lakers uniforms, that doesn’t make them Kobe Bryant.”

The President has continued to underestimate ISIS.

The other side of the page: “ISIS vs. Climate Change.” It talks about the Democratic debate Saturday night—national television—after the tragic events in Paris the night before. The moderator asked one of the leading Democrats running for President—running second in the polls now—if that candidate had a chance to back off on his claims that climate change is the greatest security threat facing the country. That candidate said: “In fact, climate change is directly related to the growth of terrorism.” That is the position I just heard from the Senator from Rhode Island. It is a position we hear from a leading candidate for President on the Democratic side of the aisle. I would wonder how many Americans believe that who—if they heard that statement, believe that is true.

That is why I come to the floor today to talk about President Obama’s plans—his plans to tear down the American energy reliability, American energy stability, things that are important for our national security, because he wants to remake energy into a form he prefers. The President has a strategy to do it. He has made it clear. He said that when he was running for President in 2008. He bragged that his plan—he said if it went through, that “electricity rates would necessarily skyrocket.” And ever since then, President Obama has been pushing to make that happen, even though he couldn’t get it passed. When he tried to get part of his plan through Congress, even the Democrats rejected it. They knew that the American people didn’t want it and that the American economy couldn’t afford it.

Did President Obama listen to the American people? Absolutely not. Did he accept the overwhelming judgment of Congress—a bipartisan approach—

that his extreme attacks on American energy were a bad idea? No, he didn't listen to that, either. The President is much more interested in the opinion of far-left, extreme environmentalists than he is in the opinion of hard-working Americans. He has done everything he can to give his plans the effect of law without asking Congress to actually pass them as laws. He has had his Environmental Protection Agency draw up regulations—regulations that would shut down American energy producers and damage our own economy. That is what the President's own Energy Information Administration has said. The agency put out a report—a report that found that the EPA's new rule on carbon dioxide emissions would close coal-fired powerplants, would raise electricity prices, and would reduce the gross domestic product of our Nation.

That is just one of many rules this administration has been pushing into force without legal support. Every one of these rules will mean hard-working Americans will lose their jobs and hard-working families will be paying higher electric bills. Put it all together, and the price tag could reach hundreds of billions of dollars.

Who is asking President Obama to do this? Who is asking to pay more in their electric bill every month? People don't want it, and the President doesn't have the authority to do it. That is why he is not asking Congress to weigh in on his plans. That is why he is pushing these rules by unelected, unaccountable bureaucrats instead of going to the people and their representatives. The American people do have a voice, and they are making their voice heard through us today.

We are here talking about two rules in particular. These are the restrictions on existing powerplants and on new powerplants, plants that haven't even been built yet. These are the core of what the President calls his Clean Power Plan.

We are here to say today that these rules go too far. The Obama administration has tried this before. It has pushed through other regulations that people didn't want and can't afford. The administration has said that it gets to decide what is best, that it gets to decide what people should do. The courts legitimately have said: not so fast.

This summer, the Supreme Court rejected a different EPA rule because the administration never bothered—this is what the Court said—to take into account the costs of the rule. The Supreme Court said: "One would not say that it is even rational"—this is the Supreme Court talking about the President's rules; it isn't even rational—"never mind 'appropriate,' to impose billions of dollars of economic costs in return for a few dollars in health or environmental benefits."

Two courts have blocked the EPA's rule on waters of the United States. One of the courts said that the rule was

likely the result of "a process that is inexplicable, arbitrary, and devoid of a reasoned process."

All of these rules are suffering from the same kinds of problems. The Obama administration, once again, has been acting far beyond its own authority and far beyond anything that is rational or appropriate for our Nation. The same day that President Obama put out the new rule on his so-called Clean Power Plan, 26 States filed lawsuits in Federal court to stop the disastrous rule. Twenty-three States sued to block the rule on new powerplants. Twenty-seven States have sued to block the rule on existing powerplants. I believe these States are going to win in court because the rules are so extreme and this administration is so out of control.

President Obama doesn't really care about any of that. He thinks he still wins even when he loses in court. He thinks if he can drag it out long enough, businesses will have to spend the money and comply anyway.

That is actually what the President's EPA chief said before the last regulation got rejected by the Supreme Court. She went on television a few days before the decision and said that it didn't matter what the Supreme Court said. She said that it didn't matter if the administration loses because the rule has already been in place for 3 years.

That is exactly what the Obama administration is counting on this time as well. That is why it is so important that Congress act today to block these rules from taking effect. We are debating the two measures that will do that. The measure by Senator McCONNELL and Senator MANCHIN—this is bipartisan—would block the rule for new powerplants, and the second measure by Senator CAPITO and Senator HEITKAMP—again, a Republican and Democrat working together—would block the rule for existing powerplants.

These are bipartisan resolutions of disapproval under the Congressional Review Act. They are our chance for Congress to stand up for the people that we represent. America can't afford these illegal rules to go into effect and be there for 3 years before the Court tosses them out.

There is another reason that Congress needs to vote to strike down these expensive, burdensome regulations immediately. Later this month, the President will be participating in the international talks on climate change. This is a meeting of about 200 countries from around the world to limit the amount of carbon dioxide and other emissions that each country can produce.

The President desperately wants his so-called Clean Power Plan so people will say he is leading on the issue. Without these illegal regulations, he has nothing to offer. Congress needs to make clear that the American people do not support these regulations. Foreign diplomats at the climate con-

ference need to understand that these rules will not stand up in court.

President Obama's ego is writing checks that his administration can't cash. Any climate deal based on these flawed rules is simply not worth the paper it is printed on. It is time for President Obama to be honest about what he can and cannot do. If he will not admit that, then Congress is going to have to make it clear so that everyone understands. The American people do have a voice. They will not allow these reckless and destructive regulations to shut down American energy production.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

MRS. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I rise today to speak in support of the Clean Power Plan and against the efforts by the majority to undermine the plan. The Clean Power Plan is vital to the environmental and economic well-being of both New Hampshire and this country. It is an important and historic step that will mitigate the effects of climate change by reducing carbon pollution from our Nation's dirtiest powerplants.

Powerplants account for nearly 40 percent of all U.S. carbon emissions. That is more than every car, every truck, and every plane in the United States combined. If we are to be successful in addressing climate change, we have to reduce the amount of pollution that is coming from this sector, and we cannot delay.

My home State of New Hampshire is doing its part to reduce carbon emissions by making smart investments in renewable energy and energy efficiency, but we do need a Federal plan to make sure our country moves forward together.

As Senator WHITEHOUSE and Senator BOXER have said so eloquently, the verdict on climate change is in. It is a reality that must be addressed. Study after study reinforces the overwhelming consensus that global temperatures are steadily rising and contributing to more extreme weather events and changes in our environment.

We are seeing that firsthand in New Hampshire, where climate records show a steady increase in yearly temperatures and annual precipitation amounts continue to grow. As a result, climate change is affecting New Hampshire's tourism and outdoor recreation economy, which are really so important to our State. Tourism is the second largest industry in New Hampshire. Each year hundreds of thousands of sportsmen and wildlife watchers come to New Hampshire to enjoy our natural resources. Hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation contribute nearly \$4.2 billion to the New Hampshire economy each year. But rising temperatures are affecting our fall foliage season, which has just ended. We are seeing fewer snow days, which impacts skiing and snowmobiling, and ice

out on our lakes is happening earlier each year.

We heard Senator WHITEHOUSE talking about the impact on fisheries in Rhode Island. We have seen that in New Hampshire as well, where cod stocks in the North Atlantic and the Gulf of Maine have been reduced so precipitously that it has devastated New Hampshire's fishing industry.

We are also seeing changes in our State's maple syrup industry. New Hampshire produces more than 100,000 gallons of maple syrup annually. It is the third largest maple producer in the New England States. Maple syrup production is entirely dependent on weather conditions. Any change, no matter how slight, can throw off production and endanger the industry. Trees require warm days and cold nights to create the optimal sugar content and sap production. The changing climate is putting more stress on sugar maples, affecting syrup production.

According to a report by the New Hampshire Citizens for a Responsible Energy Policy, "current modeling forecasts predict that maple sugar trees eventually will be completely eliminated as a regionally important species in the northeastern United States."

If we look at this chart, we can see the red here is elm, ash, and cottonwood. We see the green is oak and pine and oak and hickory. This is 1960 to 1990. This is a current look at what is happening with our trees in New Hampshire and New England. This darker red that we see here, which is almost all of New Hampshire, is maple, beech and birch trees. That is what things look like today. By 2070, you can see there are no more maple trees left in New Hampshire and all of New England. There are very few elm, ash, and cottonwoods. There is a little bit in New York. They have all moved to the West and the North.

If we fail to act on climate change, we are going to lose these trees, lose the industry, and lose our fall foliage because maples are so important to the fall foliage. Climate change is also a threat to our wildlife and their habitats.

In New Hampshire, the moose is a vital part of our State's culture, and yet, as a result of climate change, we have seen a 40-percent decline in the moose population. It is hard to see. You can see that this moose looks very distressed, as does this one. What looks like little knobs on this moose's tail are ticks. Those ticks are there because with the warmer winters, insects and ticks are not dying off. They infested our moose population, which is down 40 percent.

Climate change is also impacting the health of New Hampshire's families. New Hampshire has one of the highest childhood asthma rates in the country. Rising temperatures increase smog levels. They heighten the effects of allergy season. All of those things imperil the health of vulnerable populations in New Hampshire, which is al-

ready the tailpipe. New England is the tailpipe of the central part of the country. So all of the pollution that is being created in the Midwest by those powerplants that are spewing out fossil fuels is coming on the air currents to New Hampshire and to New England.

I am proud to say that Granite Staters have recognized the effects of climate change, and New Hampshire has been a leader in reducing pollution. We are one of nine Northeastern States that are part of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative. As a result, New Hampshire has already reduced its power sector carbon pollution by 49 percent since 2008. Because of the initiative of the State and local communities, New Hampshire is on track to meet the Clean Power Plan's carbon reduction goals 10 years early. We are going to be there by 2020, rather than 2030.

In addition, New Hampshire is investing in clean energy, using proceeds from emissions permits sold at RGGI auctions. The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative is a cap-and-trade system that is working in the nine Northeastern States. In 2012, New Hampshire invested 94 percent of those funds from the program in energy efficiency and renewable energy programs that directly benefit New Hampshire residents.

I had a chance last week to visit the western part of the State and a town named Peterborough. Actually, "Our Town," the play by Thornton Wilder, is written about Peterborough. They have built the largest solar array in New Hampshire, and they are using it to power their wastewater treatment. Selling excess power into the grid and reducing the town's other energy costs, they are saving between \$25,000 and \$50,000 a year.

What is so exciting to me is that when this project came up at a town meeting for a vote, it passed unanimously. Yesterday I had a chance to visit Middleton, NH. I went to Lavalley/Middleton Lumber. It is a sawmill that produces pine boards for Dippizio Lumber. In 2006, they installed a very large wood-fired boiler. They are able to use the byproducts from the sawmill to fire the boiler, using combined heat and power. Not only are they able to heat their complex, but they are also able to provide the generation that they need for power to run the mills. As a result of this, they are saving \$700,000 a year on their power bills.

New Hampshire has shown that we can take advantage of moving to renewable energy sources. We can make smart energy choices that benefit the environment and yet strengthen our economy. Nationally, the Clean Power Plan is projected to cut carbon emissions by millions of tons per year and generate tens of billions of dollars a year in health and climate benefits.

It is good for the economy. That is why 81 major companies, including four in New Hampshire, have signed a letter

pledging to support new initiatives that may emerge from the global conference on climate change in Paris in December. America's Clean Power Plan is a powerful demonstration of our global leadership on climate change, and it will allow the United States to lead with credibility and authority at the Paris conference.

We all know—or at least those people who are willing to acknowledge what the research shows—that climate change represents an enormous challenge, but solutions are within reach if we put in place policies that allow for action. We have a responsibility to help protect our children and our grandchildren from the severe consequences of global warming by taking action now. It is time to move forward with the Clean Power Plan without delay. It is time to stop short-circuiting efforts to reduce carbon pollution in this country.

I urge my colleagues to stop standing in the way of this important effort to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senator from Alabama be recognized to speak and that following his remarks, I be permitted to speak.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

TERRORIST ATTACKS AGAINST FRANCE AND SYRIAN REFUGEES

Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, the terrorist attacks that rocked the city of Paris and the entire world on Friday, I believe we all agree, were horrific and unthinkable. The people of France stood by our side after the horrendous events of September 11, 2001, and the American people will stand by them during this tragic time. Cowardly and barbaric acts of violence against innocent civilians absolutely should not be tolerated anywhere in our society, and we must take any and all steps available to prevent a similar attack from occurring right here in the United States.

Early reports from the terrorist attacks in Paris on Friday indicate that the refugee programs in Europe allowed at least one of the attackers to enter France. In light of these reports, the United States should take notice. We are now faced with an opportunity to make a commonsense, responsible decision that would put Americans at ease and put an end to the risk of radical Islamic terrorists infiltrating our Nation through the refugee resettlement program. I believe we simply cannot trust this administration to put in place the rigorous vetting system needed to ensure that the refugees who enter our Nation will not be future threats to our people in our own homeland. It is, without a doubt, in the best interest of the American people and our national security to immediately halt any plans to allow Syrian refugees to resettle in the United States.

We know we live in an increasingly dangerous world, and I believe the Obama administration's lack of leadership on foreign policy has exacerbated the problem. We cannot continue to let President Obama's ill-conceived policies put Americans at risk. This administration is either asleep or out of touch with the danger lurking in the world.

I ask the American people today: What is it going to take to wake up this administration? Will it take another horrific attack on our own soil and our own people?

I believe it is more than time to put an end to relocating Syrian refugees in our country, and that is why I will work tirelessly with my colleagues in the Senate to reverse President Obama's extremely dangerous position that threatens the American people and our homeland.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, on Friday we all watched in horror the tragic events that unfolded in the city of Paris. We saw radical Islamic terrorists brutally target innocent civilians in places that no one should feel unsafe—a soccer stadium, a concert hall, and a cafe. These attacks on our Nation's oldest ally have struck us here at home to our very core.

We know what it is like to be attacked in our homeland, and therefore we know what the French people are going through. As we continue to keep the French people in our thoughts and prayers, we should do everything in our power to assist them. As the facts unfold and if, indeed, ISIS did plan and execute these attacks as they have claimed, then the United States and our allies have an obligation to join France in responding swiftly and forcefully.

These attacks are a tragic reminder that the threat of ISIS stretches well beyond the Middle East. ISIS is not a JV team, nor have they been contained as the President of the United States has claimed. More than a year ago, I stood here on the Senate floor and said that we would not vote to give the President a blank check in Syria without a clear strategy with achievable objectives to defeat the terrorist threat. Nevertheless, over the course of this last year, the President has failed to come up with any sort of coherent strategy to deal with this threat. What we have seen and heard are speeches, interviews, and vague assurances that have attempted to distract the American public from the stark reality that the President's so-called strategy against ISIS is not achieving his stated objective of degrading and ultimately destroying ISIS. This whole idea that you can, through bombing attacks, defeat a threat like ISIS and, once the threat is cleared, hold that real estate or hold that land is just a pipe dream.

The United States and our partners are facing a robust enemy of more than

20,000 core and foreign fighters that have continued to murder their way across Syria and Iraq, decimating populations there and elsewhere as their influence and power grows. Over the last year, the administration's paralysis over how to defeat this terrorist threat has plunged Syria deeper and deeper into violence and chaos. What started as a civil war in Syria back in 2011 has now cost the lives of roughly 1 million Syrians. Millions of people have been internally displaced within Syria and outside of its borders into surrounding countries, such as Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon, and elsewhere, and now we are seeing that wave of refugees extend to Europe, and, indeed, some have now made their way to our shores.

By allowing ISIS to take over such a large portion of territory, President Obama has neglected one of the key recommendations of the 9/11 Commission, which advised the U.S. Government following that fateful day on September 11, 2001, to "identify and prioritize actual or potential terrorist sanctuaries." Instead, the President has stood and watched like a spectator while this terrorist army, over the course of many months, has carved out its own safe haven right in the heart of the Middle East, and in doing so, has erased the border between Syria and Iraq where they control large swaths of territory.

The capture of these swaths of territory and the spread of the violent, extremist ideology has not been the only consequence. The civil unrest in Syria has fueled the influx of nearly one-half million refugees who have flooded Eastern Europe and elsewhere.

Under questioning in the House Committee on Homeland Security last month, FBI Director James Comey was asked about the security precautions the Federal Government was taking when screening refugees. Director Comey confirmed what many of us have feared, and that is if a Syrian refugee was not already known to law enforcement and intelligence officials, it is difficult, if not impossible, for us to vet that individual's background for potential terror ties to various terrorist groups. He explained it by saying: "If someone has never made a ripple in the pond in Syria in a way that would get their identity or their interest reflected in our database, we can query our database until the cows come home but . . . there will be nothing . . . because we will have no record on that person."

I am proud of our history of opening our doors to innocent people fleeing violence or religious persecution. That is part of who we are as a country. But following Friday's attack, we should pause our Syrian refugee program until we can be sure that the individuals are being fully vetted for potential terror ties so we can ensure the public safety of all Americans, which is our first responsibility. Compassion for those refugees is important, as I said, but pro-

tecting our homeland and keeping the American people safer is the first order of business. With the latest public threat from ISIS yesterday directed at us here in the United States, we must remain vigilant against the ongoing threat that may come from those already inside our country.

The attack in Paris has drawn attention to the degree to which law enforcement and intelligence officials are able to track, surveil, and apprehend potential threats before they turn deadly, but with changing technology and damaging intelligence leaks, that is becoming increasingly challenging.

In that same House hearing in October, the Director of the National Counterterrorism Center noted that potential homegrown threats were finding ways to communicate "outside of our reach" and therefore, off our radar.

As law enforcement officials have noted, this includes the use of Internet service providers outside the United States as well as the increasingly widespread use of encryption capabilities and new technologies. Yet, as the threat of ISIS evolves and intensifies, the world is looking toward the United States as an example of strength. So I propose in the wake of this deadly attack that our administration and the Federal Government do three things.

First, the President needs to hit the pause button on Syrian refugee resettlement until the Department of Homeland Security can verify with certainty that our processes are enhanced to ensure that applicants do not have ties to ISIS or any other terror groups.

Secondly, the President needs to lay out a clear strategy for destroying perhaps the best resourced, best armed terrorist group on the planet. This is long overdue, and his failure to do so is one of the reasons we find ourselves where we are today. It is in the best interest of the Syrian people to stay in Syria if they can, but with circumstances being what they are, we can understand from a human perspective why they would seek a safe haven wherever they can find it. This refugee crisis is directly related to the President's failure to have any effective strategy to deal with the situation on the ground in Syria. It is destabilizing governments in the region, which have huge refugee populations and which have to deal with the economic and other challenges of dealing with that situation. It is important to see the refugee crisis—including the 10,000 Syrian refugees who appeared in New Orleans just this last week—is a result of a failure of any strategy to deal with this conflict in Syria.

There are suggestions that have been made that I think bear some consideration, such as having safe zones and no-fly and no-drive zones enforced by the international community. Before I spoke, I believe the Senator from Indiana suggested maybe this would be an appropriate mission for NATO. Maybe so. We ought to talk about and reach some decisions about that.

Finally, the President of the United States has the obligation to explain to the American people how he is going to defend our interests and keep our people safe here at home.

As I said, one of the biggest threats is homegrown terrorists radicalized over social media and the Internet. Perhaps even more concerning to me than the threat of a potential attacker entering the United States is a self-radicalized attacker that is already here. This homegrown threat, I believe, poses a much more imminent danger to our people—a sad fact we learned the hard way at Fort Hood, TX, in 2009, and in Garland, TX, earlier this year.

In conclusion, all indications from the White House are the President will not change a thing. He is going to stay the course in spite of the gathering risk and danger of terrorist attacks being exported or being incited within our own borders. Now, more than ever, the Nation needs the kind of strong leadership that is commensurate with the challenges we are facing. That is the kind of leadership that the American people expect and the kind of leadership that they deserve.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WICKER). The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I will have more to say about the refugee crisis and the necessity of the considerable vetting of those refugees, as well as any other refugees, as we protect ourselves here at home. I will have more to say about that later.

U.S. COMMERCIAL SPACE LAUNCH COMPETITIVENESS ACT

Mr. President, I want to bring to the attention of the Senate that last night the House passed a bill we modified—the U.S. Commercial Space Launch Competitiveness Act. It will now go to the President to be signed into law. This bill contains the language we helped to negotiate as a compromise between two different bills that had passed the House and the Senate earlier this year.

This bipartisan legislation, which passed the Senate unanimously, is a major effort that recognizes the tremendous growth of the commercial space industry. It is an industry that now represents more than 75 percent of the \$330 billion global space economy—\$330 billion. It is an industry here in the United States that will continue to grow as more companies enter into new and exciting space ventures, such as launching thousands of small satellites that will provide worldwide Internet access, such as recovering valuable resources from distant asteroids, and such as sending tourists on incredible journeys that one day may even include overnight stays in space hotels.

These are the innovative kinds of commercial space activities this little country boy dreamed about years ago when I had the privilege of helping pass the first Commercial Space Launch Act way back in 1984. It is an industry where we are starting to see a resur-

gence of activity here in the United States. For example, just 10 years ago, there was only one American commercial space launch, compared at that time to eight launches from Russia and five from Europe. Last year there were 11 American commercial launches, accounting for nearly half of the worldwide commercial launches and earning \$1.1 billion in revenue—more than both Russia and Europe for the very first time. Much of this growth has been seeded by a commercial industry supporting the needs of our space program; in particular, the International Space Station. Folks just do not realize that we have an International Space Station up there right now that is as long as from one goalpost on a football field all the way to the other goalpost. That is how big this is. There are six human beings up there on orbit right now. Two American companies are now supplying the International Space Station with critical cargo and supplies, along with our international partners. Soon, U.S. companies will begin launching NASA astronauts and international partner astronauts to the space station.

That is why this bill is so important. It paves the way for NASA to begin launching government astronauts on American-made commercial rockets so we do not have to depend on our crews getting to and from the space station just on the very proven and reliable Russian Soyuz.

Commercial companies are also making great use of the space station for medical research, and one company is even 3D-printing tools right now on the space station. So the bill extends the operations of the International Space Station to provide certainty to industry and to the international community that the station will be around not just to 2016, not just to 2020 but now, as we put it in the bill, at least to 2024. I think we will see efforts later on that it will even be extended beyond 2024. It is fitting that I mention that because this month we are celebrating the 15th anniversary of continuous human presence aboard the ISS—15 years we have had humans up there on an around-the-clock basis.

The commercial space sector is also revitalizing old government infrastructure such as the historic launch pads that lined Florida's space coast. It has been a privilege for me to spend some time there at the Cape and at the Kennedy Space Center. It is an amazing transformation of Cape Canaveral into a bustling space port, but I have seen how challenging it can be for commercial companies to get to do business out there on the Air Force territory.

That is why this bill requires the FAA, NASA, and the Air Force to work together to reduce the administrative burden on industry operating on government property and to do that by streamlining the Federal launch requirements and processes.

This bill is a major update to our commercial space legislation. It will encourage the growing commercial

space industry for many years into the future—an industry of vital economic, scientific, and national security importance.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I thank all of my colleagues who have worked with me on these resolutions to stop the EPA's destructive new regulations such as the new source performance standards. They are truly unrealistic and unreasonable and threaten our security and prosperity.

I have always said we are all entitled to our opinion and our views, we are just not entitled to our own facts. As I go through this presentation, I will show my colleagues the facts that we will not be able to give us the energy we need if we go down this destructive path.

The CRA resolution I have introduced with Senate Majority Leader MITCH MCCONNELL will disapprove and stop the EPA's rule for emissions from new coal-fired powerplants. I thank my colleague from West Virginia Senator CAPITO and the Senator from North Dakota Senator HEITKAMP for joining me in this fight by introducing a separate resolution to disapprove the EPA's rule for emissions from existing coal-fired powerplants. It is time for Congress to step in and stop these rules from harming not only hard-working West Virginians but the American consumer. I am pleased these measures are being brought to the floor for a vote today.

Never before has the Federal Government forced an industry to do something that is technologically impossible—until now. I have always said that if a regulation is not obtainable, it is unreasonable, and that is the fact we have in front of us.

The EPA has based its final rule for new coal-fired powerplants in the United States largely on a still-developing powerplant unit in Canada, which is called the Boundary Dam CCS Project. The EPA asserted in the final rule that the Boundary Dam facility has been operating full carbon capture sequestration successfully at a commercial scale since October 2014. That is found to be totally untrue. Canadian press reports have recently disclosed that the Boundary Dam project has failed to operate successfully at full CCS for any meaningful period of time.

The reports also identify the CCS system of the demonstration plant as being a key issue in the delays for getting the plant up and running. After 1 year of operation, the project was forced to replace certain important features at a cost of \$60 million. There have always been nearly \$23 million in nonperformance penalties and lost revenues.

The plant's management company, which is SaskPower, has acknowledged these recent reports and are now pushing back the project's operational date to the end of 2016, but there are no guarantees this will prove true either.

SaskPower is also claiming that the project will need at least a year of stable operation to prove the technical operation and the economics of the project, which would aid in determining commercial viability. SaskPower has announced it will not be able to make an informed decision about carbon capture sequestration until 2018. Yet the EPA here in the United States of America is demanding that all U.S. coal-fired generation industry implement this technology now. That is what I have said all along: If it is not obtainable, which it has not been—we have not spent the money trying to develop this technology, and it hasn't worked—shouldn't we at least make sure it works before we force a complete overhaul of the system or people to meet standards that are unobtainable.

These recent revelations prove that CCS is still technically unproven and still potentially damaging in a power-plant application. Therefore, it is foolish for this administration to require it now for new U.S. coal plants.

Last week I wrote a letter to Administrator McCarthy about these reports because forcing coal to meet standards when experts know that the required technology is not adequately demonstrated on a commercial scale makes absolutely no sense at all. Instead, I believe the EPA should scrap this impossible-to-meet rule or amend it to require advanced technology that has actually been implemented which would offer improved environmental performance and is commercially viable.

For the administration, this rule is more about desirability rather than feasibility, with little regard for rising consumer prices, the effects on jobs, and the impact on the reliability of our electric grid.

This administration thinks the country can do without coal. I will simply tell my colleagues this: They are in total denial. They might not like it, they might not want it, but it is built into the plan for the next 20 to 30 years. They have flat out ignored their own data that says that coal will produce more than 30 percent of our electricity through 2040.

It is completely contradictory that the EPA continues to impose unreasonable and unattainable rules in an attempt to regulate coal into extinction. The people who suffer are hard-working West Virginians and consumers across this great country. If these regulations go into effect, no new coal plants could begin new operations, more Americans would lose their jobs, and economic uncertainty would grow.

The Nation's coal-fired powerplants currently have an average age of 45 years, the average age of all coal plants in America today, which produce close to 40 percent of our power. Many will need to be replaced in the near future, and regulations that prohibit building new coal-fired powerplants can soon become a serious issue for the Nation's electricity grid and the reliability we all depend upon.

Although the Energy Information Administration—the EIA—within the Department of Energy still projects 37 percent of electricity generation will come from coal in 2040—I remind you, this administration that has put together rules that are unattainable and unreasonable is saying they are still going to need 37 percent of the electricity this country will need by 2040 from coal. The currently operating plants, without new additions, will average 65 years of age by that time. If nothing is done, these plants are averaging 65 years of age to produce the type of power this country needs. The history of coal plant operations already tells us coal plants at that age will not achieve the levels of hours of reliable operation required to meet the 2040 forecast.

The coal industry must be allowed to add the new coal-fired powerplant additions, such as the ultra-supercritical, which we know is technology that works. We know it works, but this is not the direction they are going. They are putting something that is unattainable in place. That is why we need to block this plan, the Clean Power Plan, that the President has brought before us because it cannot be attained and we are going to be in a deficit.

There is no doubt this President's agenda has already had a crushing impact on my State of West Virginia and other energy States around the country. We have to say enough is enough. In West Virginia we want clean air, we want clean water, and we are doing everything humanly possible. We have cleaned up the environment more in the last two decades than ever before.

If you look around the world, there is more coal being burned than has ever been burned before. The United States burns less than 1 billion tons of coal a year. Over 7 billion tons of coal are being burned elsewhere in the world, with 4 billion tons being burned just in China. I would venture to say nobody is meeting the standards that we are required to here for the technology that is going to be needed to be attained.

I will continue to explore all available options to prevent these unattainable regulations from impacting the State of West Virginia and the United States.

I would ask the President—this administration—to work with us to find and develop the technology that would allow us to use a product that we have in abundance in this country—which is coal—in the cleanest fashion. We can then export that technology around the world to clean up the overall environment and to help the environment around the globe.

Right now Congress needs to move forward to stop these rules that are crippling our energy production, jeopardizing the energy grid, and putting our workers out of good-paying jobs. I urge all my colleagues to support these resolutions that are put forward today when we vote.

Thank you.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 1:17 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. PORTMAN).

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL OF A RULE SUBMITTED BY THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to address the Senate as in morning business and that I be allowed to speak without a time limit.

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

The Senator from Arizona is recognized.

ISIL

Mr. McCAIN. Mr. President, it has been more than 1 year since President Obama spoke to the Nation about the threat posed by ISIL and escalated U.S. military operations against it. The goal at that time, the President said, was to degrade and destroy ISIL. One year ago, the goal was to degrade and destroy ISIL. It is impossible to look at where we are today and claim that the President's strategy is succeeding or that it is likely to succeed on anything approaching an acceptable timetable and level of risk.

No one should take this as a criticism of the men and women in uniform, as well as their civilian counterparts in the field, who are doing the best they can under the strategic and operational constraints they face, especially in the face of the White House's desire to revisit the Vietnam war tactics and to micromanage the military's campaign.

It is not that we have done nothing against ISIL; it is that there is no compelling reason to believe anything we are doing will be sufficient to destroy ISIL. Thousands of airstrikes against ISIL's targets have conjured the illusion of progress, but they have produced little in the way of decisive battlefield effects.

I noted with some interest that we provided some targeting for the French, who carried out airstrikes. I wonder why we hadn't done any of that in the last year.

ISIL continues to dominate Sunni Arab areas in the world, in both Iraq and Syria, and efforts to reclaim major population centers in those areas, such as Mosul, have stalled, to say the least. Meanwhile, ISIL continues to expand globally. It is now operating in Afghanistan, Yemen, Libya, Lebanon, and Egypt, and other radical Islamist groups, such as Boko Haram in Nigeria and al-Shabaab in Somalia, have pledged allegiance to ISIL. This appearance of success only enhances