

influence-buying of rightwing billionaires led by the infamous Koch brothers. Mayer's book catalogs the rise and the expansion into a vast array of front groups of this operation and the role in it of two of America's more shameless villains Charles and David Koch.

If you want a little more history on this unholy alliance, you can read "Poison Tea," a new book out by Jeff Nesbit. Mr. Nesbit was a Republican who worked in the Bush 41 White House. He was there at the creation. He has reviewed an enormous array of documents and he has written an amazing exposé.

The Koch brothers' say one thing, do another strategy is every bit as bad as the say one thing, do another strategy of their oil and gas allies. Remember, here is what they now say:

Charles has said the climate is changing. So, the climate is changing. . . . I think he's also said, and we believe that humans have a part in that.

Again, that is the Koch Industries' rep.

Here is what they still do: They threaten that Republicans who support a carbon tax or climate regulations would "be at a severe disadvantage in the Republican nomination process. . . . We would absolutely make that a crucial issue."

That is the President of Americans for Prosperity, the juggernaut of the Koch brothers-backed political network, which has promised to spend, believe it or not, \$750 million just in this 2016 election. What on Earth could they possibly want to spend \$750 million on?

Americans for Prosperity's president also takes credit for the "political peril" they are proud to have created for Republicans who cross them on climate change. This threat is not subtle. Step out of line and here come the attack ads and the primary challengers all funded by the deep pockets of the fossil fuel industry, powered up by Citizens United.

The result? The issue of climate change is completely absent from the Republican campaigns. They really don't want to talk about it. Every Republican candidate has gone into silence or outright denial. Their silence or outright denial is exactly paralleled on the floor of this body.

Just this week, a bipartisan effort to extend tax incentives for renewable energy fell apart after it was reported that the Kochs and an array of their front groups told the Senate majority to cease and desist from allowing an extension of renewable tax credits the majority had already agreed to.

So down came the FAA bill compromise. Of course, the Big Oil tax credits have been baked into the Tax Code, and there is no contesting them that is allowed. We now have a field in which renewable tax credits that were agreed to are not in place, but Big Oil protects its own tax breaks as the fossil fuel industry attacks the renewable tax breaks.

Look at what fossil fuel influence has done to the business lobby groups. The

Chamber of Commerce, which is probably more accurately defined now as the chamber of carbon, the American Petroleum Institute, even the National Association of Manufacturers, the National Federation of Independent Business, and the Farm Bureau—Big Oil and the Koch brothers have locked them all down. It is a wall of opposition among those groups to any sensible conversation about carbon pollution.

I have spoken before about the well-defended castle of denial constructed by the big polluters to attack and harass their opponents and to keep out the unwelcome truths of climate science. Built as it is on a foundation of lies, the denial castle is bound to crumble. We have seen cracks begin to appear in the edifice. This revelation on the part of the Koch brothers that they finally see that climate change is real and manmade is another collapse. It is a big collapse. But don't believe they are surrendering their position entirely. What we see here in Congress is that they are still fighting as hard as ever. They are just conceding some of their more extreme positions because they know some of their nonsense is now simply beyond the pale and is not acceptable. This is just a strategic retreat from a preposterous stance.

Every major scientific society in America agrees on the cause and urgency of climate change, and, I think, so do every one of our major State universities—certainly every one I have looked at—all of our National Labs, NASA, NOAA, America's national security and intelligence community, and all the corporations that signed the American Business Act on Climate Pledge, which includes major corporations from a lot of our Republican colleagues' home States. That is a lot of information to deny and ignore, and that is an awful lot of legitimate people to claim our part of the hoax.

Here it comes—the whole structure of deceit and denial erected by the fossil fuel interest is creaking and crumbling. More than a dozen attorneys general are starting to poke and probe. My Republican colleagues may want to consider getting out of the way of this because the day is coming—and soon—when the whole denier castle collapses, and that day cannot come too soon.

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

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

## MORNING BUSINESS

### CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS WEEK AND THE JUSTICE FOR ALL REAUTHORIZATION ACT

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, every year in April, we pause to observe National Crime Victims' Rights Week, and this year marks its 35th anniversary. Since 1981, in communities across the Nation, people have observed this week with candlelight vigils and public rallies to renew our commitment to crime victims and their families. Vermonters have always banded together to help crime victims and their families. That is just who we are, and I am proud of that long tradition. It is vitally important that we continue to recognize the needs of these survivors and work together to promote victims' rights and services.

One of our most important tools to do so is the Victims of Crime Act of 1984 and the crime victims fund that it created. I strongly supported passage of this critical legislation, which has been the principal means through which the Federal Government has supported essential services for crime victims and their families for more than three decades. It is time to review and renew that law, and I have been working closely with Senator GRASSLEY in that effort. Next week, the Senate Judiciary Committee will hold a hearing to assess the crime victims fund and discuss how to ensure that it continues to meet the changing needs of victims.

The Justice for All Act is another important law that promotes victims' rights. I am working with Senator CORNYN to reauthorize this vital legislation. Our bill will further strengthen the rights of crime victims; improve the use of forensic evidence, including rape kits, to provide justice as swiftly as possible; and protect the innocent by improving access to post-conviction DNA testing.

The Justice for All Reauthorization Act builds on the work I began in 2000, when I introduced the Innocence Protection Act, which sought to ensure that defendants in the most serious cases receive competent representation and, where appropriate, access to post-conviction DNA testing. I served proudly as a prosecutor in Vermont for 8 years, and I believe that we must find those responsible for crimes and prosecute them. But we must also ensure that our system does not wrongly convict those who are innocent. DNA testing is often necessary to prove the innocence of individuals in cases where the system got it grievously wrong. "Innocent until proven guilty" is a hallmark of our criminal justice system, but when a person who has been found guilty is truly innocent, we cannot stand idly by. We must act to exonerate that person.

The Innocence Protection Act passed as part of the original Justice for All Act in 2004, and since that time, at

least 26 people have been exonerated through DNA testing funded by the legislation. In North Carolina, for example, a man was released after spending 37 years in prison for a double murder he did not commit. In Virginia, a man was released after spending 27 years in prison for violent rapes he did not commit. And in New Orleans, a man was released after spending 20 years in a State mental health hospital for an abduction and rape he did not commit. We must continue funding this critical post-conviction DNA testing since we know our system does not always get it right. It is an outrage when an innocent person is wrongly punished, and this injustice is compounded when the true perpetrator remains on the streets, able to commit more crimes. We are all less safe when the system gets it wrong.

As we begin this year's Crime Victims' Rights Week, I look forward to working with Senators on both sides of the aisle to update and reauthorize both the Victims of Crime Act and the Justice for All Reauthorization Act. Survivors and their families deserve nothing less.

#### OBSERVING WORLD HEMOPHILIA DAY

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, today I wish to celebrate April 17 as World Hemophilia Day where we recognize the serious challenges of the 20,000 Americans who suffer each day from hemophilia and where we raise awareness to fight for a cure.

Hemophilia is a rare genetic disorder that prevents an individual's ability to form a proper blood clot. Patients with hemophilia need immediate access to care and lifesaving therapies. There is currently an enormous discrepancy in the level of care available to patients with hemophilia. While some are diagnosed very young and have medical care throughout their life, most do not or do not have the access to diagnosis and treatment they need. As a physician, I have treated patients with hemophilia, and I know how debilitating the health problems endured by those living with hemophilia can be. If left untreated, a bleeding episode can lead to terrible pain, chronic joint and muscle damage, serious injury, or even death.

I am hopeful that through attention, diligence, and raised awareness we might prevent more complications, unnecessary procedures, and disabilities so often caused by these diseases. As we increase our understanding and awareness of hemophilia, we also increase our ability to find treatments and eventually, a cure for this disease. I'm proud to stand today in support of all Americans with hemophilia on World Hemophilia Day.

#### 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS VOLUNTARY SERVICE

Mrs. McCASKILL. Mr. President, I ask the Senate to join me today in recognizing, celebrating, and highlighting the significance of the 70th anniversary of the Department of Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service, VAVS, this year. This program is one of the largest centralized volunteer groups in the Federal Government with approximately 75,000 volunteers providing more than 9.7 million hours of service for our Nation's veterans during their hospital stay.

It has been 70 years since this program started in 1946. Since then, the volunteers have donated more than 782.2 million hours of service to support our veterans. More than 7,400 national and community organizations support the volunteers, including support by a national advisory committee, comprising 55 major veteran, civic, and service organizations who work together to improve volunteerism in VA.

Keeping up with the VA's fast-paced efforts to expand access to care for veteran patients into the community, this program, too, has strived to continue their efforts to assist our veterans. The volunteers serve in many different ways, including supplementing staff in hospital wards, community living centers, outpatient clinics, community-based volunteer programs, respite care programs, end-of-life care programs, creative arts, adaptive sports, vet centers, veterans homes, national cemeteries, and veterans benefits offices.

Just in 2015, the volunteers contributed a total of 10.8 million hours of service. The current monetary value of those hours from all of the volunteers is more than \$250 million. Additionally, the volunteers and their organizations contributed more than \$105 million in gifts and donations in 2015, for a combined total value of \$355.5 million in volunteer service and giving.

While the tangible value of these volunteer activities is impressive, it is impossible to calculate all of the compassionate care and efforts that the volunteers provide for our veterans. These volunteers are a priceless asset for the Department of Veterans Affairs.

I ask that the Senate join me in celebrating the Department of Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service on 70 years of outstanding service to our Nation's veterans and wishing them the best in continuing to serve.

#### RECOGNIZING THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SUPERINTENDENTS OF U.S. NAVAL SHORE ESTABLISHMENTS

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I wish to recognize the contributions of the National Association of Superintendents of U.S. Naval Shore Establishments, NAS NSE, on the occasion of its 100th national convention. Since its founding near the time of World War I,

NAS NSE has worked to promote the welfare of its members and increase the efficiency of work at Navy yards and naval stations.

The members of NAS NSE encompass diverse trades, including shop superintendents and senior managers from engineering, project management, financial, business office, facilities, base operations, and resource management. Despite their varied backgrounds, these professionals possess a common ability to lead, educate, and manage, as well as a true dedication to the protection of our country. In particular, the NAS NSE chapter at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard is committed to ensuring the Navy's submarines are maintained, repaired, and modernized to the highest degree in order to fulfill the Navy's mission of winning wars, deterring aggression, and maintaining freedom of the seas.

As threats facing our Nation increase and become more complex, the Navy's ability to project power and uniquely provide worldwide presence plays an increasingly critical role in protecting our national security. As such, it is critical that our naval fleet is properly maintained so it can be positioned around the world where and when we need it. NAS NSE members play a vital role in ensuring that our ships are ready to deploy on schedule and in good condition.

Over the past 100 conventions, NAS NSE has worked on many important issues, including many shipyard safety and leadership issues. This year, their efforts continue to focus on empowering shipyard workers to be leaders, helping new employees to efficiently achieve proficiency in necessary skills, and developing innovation in the shipyard. Through these and many other initiatives aimed at increasing the safety and abilities of its members, NAS NSE has improved both the lives of shipyard workers and the efficiency of our shipyards.

I commend the organization for its commitment to passing on a strong and healthy program of naval maintenance, so that future generations can benefit from a Navy ready to defend our freedoms. It is an honor for me to pay tribute to the National Association of Superintendents of U.S. Naval Shore Establishments as they celebrate 100 years of meeting to work on behalf of our shipyard workers and our naval shipyards.

Mr. KING. Mr. President, today I join my esteemed colleague, Senator SUSAN COLLINS, in recognizing the 100th Convention of the National Association of Superintendents of the U.S. Naval Shore Establishments, NAS NSE. This association works diligently to implement a strong and healthy program of naval maintenance and modernization at our naval shipyards, so future generations can benefit from a Navy that is always ready to defend our freedom.

I specifically wish to recognize the work of the NAS NSE chapter at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery,