

Veto message to accompany 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."

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the veto message on S.J. Res. 24 be considered as having been read; that it be printed in the RECORD, spread in full upon the Journal, and held at the desk.

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

The veto message ordered to be printed in the RECORD is as follows:

#### MEMORANDUM OF DISAPPROVAL

S.J. Res. 24 is a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5 of the United States Code of a rule submitted by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) relating to "Carbon Pollution Emission Guidelines for Existing Stationary Sources: Electric Utility Generating Units." This resolution would nullify the Clean Power Plan, the first national standards to address climate-destabilizing greenhouse gas pollution from existing power plants. Accordingly, I am withholding my approval of this resolution. (The Pocket Veto Case, 279 U.S. 655 (1929)).

Climate change poses a profound threat to our future and future generations. Atmospheric levels of carbon dioxide, a primary greenhouse gas, are higher than they have been in at least 800,000 years. In 2009, EPA determined that greenhouse gas pollution endangers Americans' health and welfare by causing long-lasting changes in the climate that can have, and are already having, a range of negative effects on human health, the climate, and the environment. We are already seeing the impacts of climate change, and established science confirms that we will experience stronger storms, deeper droughts, longer wildfire seasons, and other intensified impacts as the planet warms. The Pentagon has determined that climate change poses immediate risks to our national security.

The Clean Power Plan is a tremendously important step in the fight against global climate change. It is projected to reduce carbon pollution from power plants by 32 percent from 2005 levels by 2030. It builds on progress States and the power sector are already making to move toward cleaner energy production, and gives States the time and flexibility they need to develop tailored, cost-effective plans to reduce their emissions. By nullifying the Clean Power Plan, S.J. Res. 24 not only threatens ongoing progress toward cleaner energy, but would also eliminate public health and other benefits of up to \$54 billion per year by 2030, including thousands fewer premature deaths from air pollution and thousands fewer childhood asthma attacks each year.

The Clean Power Plan is essential in addressing the largest source of greenhouse gas pollution in our country. It is past time to act to mitigate climate impacts on American communities. Because the resolution would overturn the Clean Power Plan, which is critical to protecting against climate change and ensuring the health and well-being of our Nation, I cannot support it.

To leave no doubt that the resolution is being vetoed, in addition to withholding my signature, I am returning S.J. Res. 24 to the Secretary of the Senate, along with this Memorandum of Disapproval.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, December 18, 2015.

#### MEASURE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR—S. 2434

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I understand that there is a bill at the desk that is due a second reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the bill by title for the second time.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2434) to provide that any executive action that infringes on the powers and duties of Congress under section 8 of article I of the Constitution of the United States or on the Second Amendment to the Constitution of the United States has no force or effect, and to prohibit the use of funds for certain purposes.

Mr. MCCONNELL. In order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to further proceedings.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection having been heard, the bill will be placed on the calendar.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

#### WELCOMING COLLEAGUES BACK AND THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS TO CONGRESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I wish to welcome colleagues back to a new year in a new Senate that is back to work for the American people. It is clear we had a successful 2015. Committees began functioning again. Senators began having more of a say again. We got important things accomplished for the American people. We are looking to build upon this progress in 2016. There is, of course, much to be done, but I am optimistic about what can be achieved with a bipartisan dedication to moving back to regular order, not just this year but in the years to come.

The scale of what any Congress will be able to accomplish in a given year often depends upon the willingness of the President to cooperate and engage in good faith. When President Obama comes to address Congress tomorrow, he will have an important opportunity

to demonstrate that to the American people. The question is, Will he rise to the moment? Based on what the White House has been saying in the media, it is unlikely we will hear a unifying message for our country tomorrow. That is unfortunate. I think the American people can expect to hear a positive message from Governor Haley. Many are looking forward to hearing what she has to say. I will have much more to say on all of that tomorrow.

#### REMEMBERING DALE BUMPERS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, let me again welcome all of our colleagues back. I think they will join me in remembering former Senator Dale Bumpers, who passed away over the holidays.

Some called Dale Bumpers an improbable Senator. Others have remarked on his humor and wit. But what is clear about this former Senate colleague is that he was larger than life in many ways. I am sure his name will continue to be remembered by Arkansans for many years to come. The Senate sends its condolences to the family and friends Senator Bumpers leaves behind.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

#### TRIBUTE TO CHAPLAIN DR. BLACK

Mr. REID. Mr. President, while the Chaplain is in the building, I wish to say a brief word. I have the good fortune—and have for many years—to come to the floor every day and listen to a prayer offered in sincerity by our Chaplain. The people who watch us on TV think that all he does is walk in here every day and give a little prayer. The fact is, I received information on the things he did this past year.

He represented the Senate in 27 out-of-town speaking engagements. Those speaking engagements are tremendous. He has been in Nevada on a number of occasions. He is a tremendous presenter of what he does and what is good for the country. He delivered the invocation and/or benediction to 17 different ceremonies. He spoke at 10 different Senate functions. He visited with 20 different school groups who came to visit the Capitol. He delivered the invocation at 12 local events. He spoke at 26 local events. He hosted 11 guest Chaplains. He hosted three Jewish programs. He administered premarital and marriage-enrichment counseling. He mentored 20 Senate staffers in a recurring, 10-week spiritual mentoring program. He facilitated the Wednesday morning weekly Prayer Breakfast. He hosted two men's Prayer Breakfasts for Senate staff featuring Os Guinness and Michael Franzese as guest speakers. He hosted a special program at Easter, our 20th

annual Thanksgiving service, and a holiday open house for the Senate community.

He prayed on the Senate floor for the convening of most Senate sessions. He taught 44 Bible studies for approximately 150 Senate staff. He taught 44 Bible studies for approximately 15 staff in the Postal Square Building. He taught 40 Bible studies for the Senators in Senator INHOFE's Capitol office. He taught 44 Bible studies for 15 chiefs of staff. He engaged in hospital visitations on frequent occasions and gave weekly updates about the sick and injured at the Senate Prayer Breakfast. He delivered the eulogy for former Senator Edward Brook at the National Cathedral. He spoke at memorial services and funerals for various Senate staff members. He ministered to Senate office staff members during times of grief. He spoke to Senate staff during staff meetings.

That is not all. In relation to his activities and duties, he hosted a ladies' small group Bible study every Monday, consisting of Senate staff. He had a small group of men consisting of Capitol police officers and other Senate staff for Bible study every Wednesday.

Mr. President, everyone should know that he does more than give this prayer opening the Senate every day. In fact, if that was all he did, it would be well worth the functions of the Senate Chaplain, but he does much more. I congratulate him and express the appreciation of the entire Senate for the good work and good representations this fine man does representing our country. Remember, he is a retired admiral of the U.S. Navy.

#### REMEMBERING DALE BUMPERS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, on another subject, I had the good fortune yesterday to attend the funeral of Dale Bumpers in Little Rock, AR. The ceremony lasted almost 2 hours. It was a stunningly spiritual, humorous, and historical occasion.

Dale Bumpers performed at that desk back there by the exit of this door. He had an extra long extension cord, and he traipsed around back there, walking back and forth, speaking only as he could do. It is what we do here in the Senate. Based on seniority, everyone moves forward. He served here for a quarter of a century, but he never wanted to leave that space back there because that was his place to inform the public about how he felt about different issues.

Coming from the Presiding Officer's State, he was a man who didn't fit the mold necessarily of what a lot of people expected of a Senator, but he was a giant killer politically. He defeated Orval Faubus after he had been in a governorship in the State of Arkansas for many years—a famous man; he beat him. Four years later, he beat William Fulbright, a longtime Member of the U.S. Senate and one of the most prominent, famous Senators in the history of

the country. Then he started 24 years of service here in the Senate.

I have great admiration for Dale Bumpers. The speeches and eulogies given yesterday were remarkable. His son Brent spoke for a short period of time. Former Senator David Pryor spoke for quite a while and talked about things they did together, the work they did on behalf of Arkansas.

At the Pryor Center, they are doing a recorded history of how people feel about Senator Bumpers. I had the ability to give my view. I said that I did not know of a Senate delegation with more power than Bumpers and Pryor had for the State of Arkansas during my more than three decades of service here in the Capitol. I have never seen two people who had as much power and prestige for a State as Bumpers and Pryor had.

I am very fortunate that Landra and I were able to attend that funeral and listen to the eulogies given by Pryor and then, of course, by President Bill Clinton. It is too bad that the entire service couldn't have been recorded because it was hilarious. He was an extremely funny man and a man who taught me a lot about the Senate. I have missed him for a long time, and I will always remember him for a number of reasons, not the least of which was his ability to speak.

#### THE PRESIDENT'S LEADERSHIP

Mr. REID. Mr. President, in less than 300 days, the American people will head to the polls to elect the President of the United States. An election year places the state of our Union under intense scrutiny. At this time it is important to remember just how far we have come through the leadership of President Barack Obama.

I can remember the first time I heard Barack Obama's name. I was in the House gym, where I worked out for many years. Former Members have a little room in the back. Abner Mikva—long-time Congressman from Illinois, top lawyer for President Clinton, appellate court judge, and has had quite a remarkable career himself—was there. While we were getting dressed, he said to me: We have a Senate race in Illinois. And I asked: Well, whom are you supporting? He said: Barack Obama. I thought he was trying to be funny. Barack Obama? Come on. That is basically what I said to him, but I was wrong and he was right. This man with the unusual name was elected President of the United States.

It is important to remember just how far we have come through his leadership. After 8 years of disaster under President Bush, the American people embraced President Obama's message of hope and change. On January 20, 2009, Barack Obama became the first African-American President in the history of our country. Instead of working with the President to repair our economy, strengthen the middle class, and help working families, Republicans

have chosen a path, for 7 years, of relentless obstruction.

In fact, during the President's first term, the Republican leader publicly said: "The single most important thing we want to achieve is for President Obama to be a one-term President." As we look back over 7 years of the Obama Presidency, one thing is clear: Republicans have failed in their radical crusade against him. President Obama inherited the worst recession since the Great Depression. He acted immediately to address the economic crisis and begin rebuilding our economy. Because of President Obama, our economy has fought back from the brink of destruction, which is what it really was.

Last month, record car sales were announced for the year 2015. How did it come about? Because President Obama went against the Republicans every step of the way by saving Chrysler and GM and giving Ford a great boost. The most significant car and truck sales in the history of our country occurred last year. Millions of Americans now have health care. The President made sure he fulfilled his promise of getting Osama bin Laden, and he did. He was killed. The President has taken bold action to address our broken immigration system, doubled our country's production of renewable energy, and expanded access to higher education for millions of Americans.

I have a lot of affection and admiration for President Obama and most everyone knows that. I have had the good fortune of working with him for the past 9 years in the Senate and as President. His rescuing the Nation from crisis, his bold legislative achievement, and his refusal to back down in the face of Republican obstruction have made him one of the best Presidents of all time.

No State was hit harder by the recession and foreclosure crisis than Nevada. President Obama provided the resources necessary to stabilize the shattered housing markets, keep responsible borrowers in their homes, and reduce foreclosures. Through the efforts he made, the President and his administration were able to provide about \$200 million to Nevada's hardest hit homes, and there were lots of them. It didn't take care of all the problems, but it certainly helped a great deal. These were programs that provided unemployed and underemployed homeowners financial assistance.

Nevada's unemployment rate reached almost 14 percent. Across the country, the rate of unemployment was about 10 percent. Today we have seen over 70 consecutive months of job growth, and our economy has added more than 14 million private sector jobs during the Obama years. Keep in mind what was happening during the last months of the Bush administration. During the first 2 months after the President was elected but not sworn into office, 800,000 jobs were lost 2 months in a row. It is hard to comprehend that, but that is what happened.