

And as far back as 1956, the New York Times reported early evidence connecting climate change with greenhouse gases from fossil fuel combustion. That prescient article concluded with a sad commentary: "Coal and oil are still plentiful and cheap in many parts of the world, and there is every reason to believe that both will be consumed by industry as long as it pays to do so."

Despite the overwhelming scientific evidence, many in the Senate refuse to accept that climate change is caused by human activity. During the Keystone Pipeline debate at the end of 2014, a majority of Senators revealed they were in denial about climate change. Over the course of three votes on resolutions concerning climate change, all but one Senator could agree that climate change is "real." However, only 14 Republican Senators agreed that human activity contributes to climate change, and only five of those Republican Senators would agree that human activity significantly contributes to climate change. This denial of the link between our greenhouse gas emissions and climate change makes political action very difficult.

Several of my colleagues have spoken about organizations and industries that have actively contributed to the political denial of climate change. These coordinated campaigns to obscure the facts and defeat legislative solutions have succeeded in delaying action.

However, whether we act now to forestall the worst changes or we are forced to react to the refugees and the floods and the fires after the fact, there is no escaping that we must reckon with the reality of climate change.

Fortunately, we have already demonstrated that political progress is possible. For example, California has implemented several policies to address the problem, including a cap-and-trade program to return statewide emissions back to their 1990 levels by 2020, a renewable portfolio standard requiring 50 percent renewable electricity by 2030, regulations to double energy efficiency by 2030, a low-carbon fuel standard to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transportation fuels at least 10 percent by 2020, and a program to reach 1 million zero-emission vehicles by 2020.

Here is the thing: Even as California is implementing these policies, the State continues to grow. The State's economy grew by 2.8 percent last year, and unemployment was reduced by 1.3 percent. Both of those figures are better than the national average.

Combating climate change will grow our national economy; ignoring the reality will only weaken it. We will all be forced to recognize the reality of climate change sooner or later. The faster we act, the easier it will be to avoid catastrophic disasters, disruptions, and dislocations.

This problem requires the sincere, informed collaboration individuals, businesses, and every level of government.

It is hard to undertake such a collaboration, however, when well-financed special interests dig in their heels, and place profits over the public's needs.

We are out of time.

Let's end the denial of climate change and start building sustainable energy, water, and transportation infrastructure. This transformation will be good for our businesses and communities, and it is what the next generation needs.

#### 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FARM CREDIT SYSTEM

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, today I wish to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Farm Credit System and to recognize the important contributions of the Mid Atlantic Farm Credit to Delaware's farmers and communities.

When President Woodrow Wilson signed the Federal Farm Loan Act of 1916, he created a robust and reliable source of credit for American farmers and ranchers that would come to serve our rural communities for a century. Since its founding, the Farm Credit has supported farming operations large and small and served as a lifeline for farmers in the face of tremendous hardships—including the Great Depression, the Second World War, and the farm crisis of the 1980s.

Today, the Farm Credit System supports farmers and ranchers with a wide variety of financial services, including crop insurance, appraisal service, life insurance, and the leasing of farm-related vehicles. By providing farm operations with the financial trust and support they need to get up and running or survive and thrive through difficult times, the Farm Credit System has been crucial to the ongoing success of our farmers, rural communities, local economies, and national agriculture sector. The partnership of the Farm Credit System with communities across the Nation throughout the last century has helped to build our country's vibrant and thriving agriculture sector.

Across the country, the Farm Credit System continues to do a great deal of good for the farmers and farm families who need help the most, ensuring that farmers who are young, beginners, or own a small plot have the financial footing they need to embark on the difficult yet rewarding experience of starting their own farm operation. By supporting organizations such as 4-H and the Future Farmers of America, the Farm Credit System is working to make a brighter future for our farmers in the generations to come.

In Delaware, farms and communities rely on the Mid Atlantic Farm Credit for those essential services. With 17 branches across Delaware and our neighboring States of Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Virginia, the Mid Atlantic Farm Credit supports over 11,000 members and today has more than \$2.5 billion in outstanding trust. The folks there have made a great impact on the

communities they serve, providing scholarships, sponsorships, and their own interactive educational learning system to continuously support the families and businesses they work with. The Mid Atlantic Farm Credit's dedication and commitment to their customers goes above and beyond their responsibilities in agriculture credit and funding.

I am delighted and honored to recognize the Mid Atlantic Farm Credit and the Farm Credit System, which for the past 100 years has helped meet the credit and financial service needs of rural communities and allowed American agriculture to flourish in Delaware and across these United States of America.

#### RECOGNIZING THE WYOMING AIR NATIONAL GUARD

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, it is a privilege to recognize the Wyoming Air National Guard as it celebrates its 70th anniversary.

The Wyoming Air National Guard boasts a legacy of service that spans decades—and generations. Since its formation, dedicated men and women from communities throughout Wyoming have provided essential support to our State, Nation, and world during times of trial. This rich history illustrates Wyoming's devotion and commitment to serving our Nation.

The Wyoming Air National Guard was organized in Cheyenne on August 10, 1946, and designated the 187th Fighter Group. Three years after formation, the 187th was tested. During the Great Blizzard of 1949, the Guard took to the air to aid stranded ranchers, travelers, and residents in central and southeastern Wyoming. Operations Snowbound and Haylift included more than 200 flyovers to provide much-needed supplies, such as food and medicine, to those stranded below. In addition, members of the 187th provided over 550 tons of hay to livestock.

The members of the Wyoming Air National Guard have provided mission support in nearly every national military campaign. During the Korean conflict, Wyoming pilots served around the world in Germany, Japan, and South Korea, flying over 1,500 combat missions.

The Guard also served valiantly in the face of other major military conflicts. In 1953, under the threat of nuclear war, the 187th Fighter Group was redesignated as the 187th Fighter Interceptor Squadron. The squadron's members trained relentlessly and routinely executed 5-minute simulation drills to prepare for attacks from Russian bombers.

During the Vietnam war, the Air Guard flew combat zone missions in Southeast Asia. In 1966, the group was designated as the 153rd Military Airlift Group and later as the 153rd Aeromedical Airlift Group. Throughout the grueling conflict, Wyoming airmen flew dangerous missions through rough

terrain to move wounded and fallen soldiers from the battlefield. Remarkably, no Wyoming Air National Guard lives were lost during the war.

During Operations Desert Storm and Desert Shield in the early 1990s, the men and women of the 153rd supported the war effort by transporting troops and supplies within the U.S. and in Central and South America. The Guard's medical personnel were activated and sent to Saudi Arabia and were later sent to aid the Kurdish people in Iraq during Operation Provide Comfort.

The terrorist attacks of 9/11 drastically changed America. The Wyoming Air National Guard was the first unit to resume flying. In addition to transporting blood donations around the western United States, the 153rd Airlift Wing was deployed in support Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. In total, the Wyoming Air National Guard has deployed personnel abroad more than 3,700 times since 2001.

Today the Wyoming Air National Guard continues to be known for its outstanding versatility and integrity. Members remain actively involved in a wide range of missions in Wyoming, the United States, and around the world. These operations include providing humanitarian aid, supplies, and transportation for servicemembers. Additionally, the 153rd Airlift Wing provides antiterrorism support worldwide.

The heroes of the Wyoming Air National Guard proudly offer aid and support to our friends and neighbors at home. One crucial mission, especially in the Western United States, is firefighting. In 1976, two aircraft were outfitted with the Modular Airborne Fire Fighting System, beginning a long history of exceptional firefighting deployments. MAFFS has become an essential tool in our Nation's efforts to battle forest fires. In 40 years, the Guard unit has helped extinguish fires from Washington to Arizona, including the historic 1988 Yellowstone National Park fire and the 2007 wildfires in California.

The Wyoming Air National Guard continues to maintain the highest levels of integrity and reliability whenever and wherever they are called to serve. These dedicated men and women routinely pause their own lives to stand tall in the face of danger. Our State commends these heroes—and those who came before them—for all they have done to protect our most cherished ideals.

I encourage my colleagues to join me in recognizing the Wyoming Air National Guard's 70 years of courage, commitment, and dedication.

#### TRIBUTE TO JO ANN EMERSON

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to Jo Ann Emerson for her tireless dedication and service to both her State and her country. I had the pleasure of serving with Jo

Ann in the House of Representatives. She has always been well-respected by her constituents, her colleagues in Congress, and the many individuals and families whose problems she dealt with as if they were her family. When Congresswoman Emerson left the Congress, she became the CEO of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, NRECA. She worked hard across the country for the kinds of communities and families she understands so well in our State of Missouri.

It would be difficult for me to convey just how great an impact she has always had on those she encountered better than the remarks made by Jeffrey Connor, interim CEO, on June 13 at the NRECA summer board meeting.

I ask unanimous consent to have his remarks printed in the RECORD.

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

Today marks the end of Jo Ann's tenure as CEO of NRECA, and there is so much for which to thank her.

Jo Ann has not walked through the doors of this building since July 29th of last year—46 weeks ago.

And I have said it many times since then: We miss our leader, but we have not lacked for her leadership. Jo Ann's influence on NRECA, our staff members, the work we do and the privilege of serving our membership—those things remained at the core of our mission—even in her physical absence.

Jo Ann and I would start each day with five minutes to reflect on the events of the day before and to contemplate the day ahead. And I still make time for that five minutes every day, for her counsel and guidance, to let her remind me what is truly important in our work.

NRECA has been through an incredible amount of change, with Jo Ann leading the charge, joyfully.

Jo Ann has made a remarkable difference in the partnership between NRECA and our members. She enhanced our reputation in Washington DC. And she brought with her: openness to new ideas, an appetite for innovation, transparency and a highly-involved, very personal approach.

It's remarkable to me that this organization is so different after just three years, and that Jo Ann accomplished that internal change even as she spent so much time out with our membership. She was everywhere at once.

And she worked constantly. She was available all the time, accessible for any reason, to any individual on our team or in our membership. She was "Always On."

I've been fortunate to see that selfless work ethic in action from the time I joined Jo Ann's congressional staff in 2003.

She made decisions with the Three C's in mind and in order: Her Conscience, Her Constituents, and Her Caucus.

She fought for every job in the district. She fought for the cost of every prescription drug. She fought for every inch of four-lane highway. She fought for every veteran who needed to see a specialist, every expectant mother who needed a home nursing visit for pre-natal care. She fought for every flood and tornado victim. She fought for every man and woman called to active duty in the armed services.

Her conscience demanded that she represent the members of her community, regardless of how they voted or even if they voted. She represented her whole constitu-

ency. No matter how cantankerous. No matter how poor. No matter how rural.

It is safe to say, and I think you know this too, that Jo Ann Emerson did not choose politics. Politics chose Jo Ann Emerson.

Even her campaign slogan reflected her personal morality. Election after election, it was, "Putting People Before Politics." And it made her a beloved leader as a member of Congress.

"Work Days with Jo Ann" in the district is one of the best examples of how she would stand shoulder to shoulder with her constituents. Of course, for Work Days, Jo Ann chose to call the cattle auction at the sale barn, deliver UPS packages, serve customers from the drive-through window at McDonald's, and read the St. Louis Cardinals report on the local sports radio station.

Perhaps there were four C's: Conscience, Constituents, Caucus, and Cardinals.

Any way you describe her, the key to Jo Ann is her perspective. When Jo Ann came to NRECA, she did so with a great perspective on our membership. It was almost as though she had gone from one congressional district in southern Missouri to a bigger one—with 42 million people in it. She knew exactly what to do, and she went right to work.

Within six months, she had been up in a bucket truck, shot an advocacy advertisement for a national audience, opened up Facebook and social media to the staff, started a strategic planning process, coined the term Co-op Nation, and laid down a challenge to submit 1 million comments to the Environmental Protection Agency on the Clean Power Plan.

I bet I've heard Jo Ann say this a million times: Perception is reality. It's usually my "reality" being generally overruled by her perception of it.

Jo Ann uniquely understands the importance of NRECA to our members, the reason we exist. She appreciates the essential partnership between NRECA and the communities we serve.

If there is one way to summarize Jo Ann's contribution here, it is to say that—at a critical moment in our history—she changed NRECA's perception of the world and the world's perception of NRECA, and therefore she changed our reality.

And so she lifted the NRECA International Program into a position of prominence with our members and in Washington. She began to build the reputation of NRECA around it.

Jo Ann re-energized our communications channels and gave our members a fresh voice in Washington. She tackled member engagement from the ground up. She re-organized our approach to the experience we offer to NRECA members.

She relished walking up to a member and asking—point blank—what do you think we can do better at NRECA?

She understood that doing right is always more important than being right. She challenged us to work collaboratively. She made it possible for us to fail, and then showed us what we could learn from failure. She opened the doors to the CEO office, and she would sit and listen for a minute with anyone who asked for her time. Anyone.

Even small changes in perception make a big difference, though, like the annual picnic we will enjoy this evening where the NRECA Board members and the Arlington staff, interns and contractors will have a chance to share a meal and fellowship.

Hers has been a short chapter in NRECA's long history, but it is a most important one.

We can thank Jo Ann for helping us realize the exciting possibilities for a united, well-informed, ambitious and innovative membership. For peeling back the layers of NRECA in order to show our members that we are an organization full of leadership. For leading