

and see that they give almost every county in America an F rating. In fact, they give every county in Delaware an F rating in air quality. They categorize those under “high ozone days” and one of three counties just barely skated by with a D in particle pollution for Delaware, while in Oklahoma the two largest metropolitan areas actually received an A from the American Lung Association. Similarly, in that same study, Rhode Island lacks a single county that doesn’t get an F for air quality on high ozone days, while only two counties received passing grades for particulate pollution.

The accusation that somehow the American Lung Association has looked at Scott Pruitt and his record on environmental policy and has given us dirty air quality is not actually true when you see the full study.

What is interesting, as well, is that the EPA publishes data about whether counties meet the national ambient air quality standards, and they have six criteria that the EPA puts out. In fact, recently they dropped their criteria significantly from the previous years. What is interesting, as well, is that for Oklahoma, last week, the EPA released their national ambient air quality standards, trying to determine which counties had attainment of the standard or nonattainment. Guess what. Every single county in Oklahoma—all 77—have attainment. Even as to the new standard that was just released, that we don’t even have to operate under, we already meet those standards for ambient air quality.

Meanwhile, Maryland has 12 counties in nonattainment for at least 1 of those criteria. Connecticut has eight counties that don’t meet those standards. California has 38 of their 58 counties failing to meet those standards in at least 1 criteria. There are 77 counties in Oklahoma, and every single one of them meets attainment.

I don’t hear anyone standing on this floor challenging the attorney general of California or of Maryland or of Connecticut and demonizing them and accusing them of not taking care of the air and the water in their State.

By the way, I have also heard on this floor, as my State is being ripped apart for political gain, over and over that asthma rates for children are catastrophically high in Oklahoma and that Scott Pruitt should have been more engaged, filing lawsuits so that asthma rates would go down—until you look at the CDC website for asthma rates for children. It is 10.1 in Oklahoma. One child is too many. It is 10.1 percent in our State, but you can compare that to Rhode Island, which is 12.4; or Michigan, which is 10.7. Vermont beat us, by the way. They are 9.9—0.2 below us.

Again, I don’t hear anyone on this floor calling out the attorneys general of Vermont, Michigan, and Rhode Island and saying they failed to protect their children because children have asthma in their State.

Another thing that is commonly said about Scott Pruitt and the State of Oklahoma is that he is committed to conventional energy sources and that he is stuck in the past, dealing with oil and gas.

I will tell you that Oklahoma is rightfully right proud of its history of oil and gas in our State. We have unlocked resources that have absolutely powered our Nation forward. We also have an incredible group of visionaries in our State that are driving renewable resources as fast as we are driving oil and gas in our State.

For all the folks that are here bashing oil and gas, I would remind you that you traveled to Washington, DC, on a plane, in a car, or on a train that was powered by Oklahoma energy. So you are welcome. And I will assume that, 2 weeks from now, when we return back for session, you are going to ride in on a horse just to be able to spite Oklahoma’s energy—probably not. But can I remind you of something?

What is often overlooked about Oklahoma and what has not been stated here is that Oklahoma truly is an all-of-the-above energy State—solar, hydroelectric, geothermal, wind, oil, gas, and coal.

Let me give you an example—just one of the examples from that. Recent data shows that Oklahoma ranks third nationally in total wind power. We just passed California for total wind production. We are just barely behind Iowa and Texas. The installed capacity for Oklahoma alone—just in wind generation—is 1.3 million households powered by wind power out of Oklahoma.

I will admit that I am a little biased about my State. But I am weary of hearing people inaccurately demean the air and water in Oklahoma and try to accuse it of something that is not true for their political benefit.

Here is my invitation to any Member of this body. Why don’t you come home to Oklahoma with me? I will buy you some great barbecue and drive you around the State. I will take you through the Green Country in the northeast part of the State, over to Kenton, OK, and Black Mesa to see the majestic area around our panhandle. We will drive four-wheelers in Little Sahara, and maybe we will drive down to Beavers Bend Park, stand under the tall trees, and put our feet in the crystal clear water of that river. I will even take you to my house in Oklahoma City, a community of a million people that exceeds the EPA air quality standards for ambient air quality.

We say in Oklahoma: “The land we belong to is grand,” and we mean it. We are passionate about our land, and we are passionate about our air and water. I will tell you that Scott Pruitt is passionate about his State and what we do there.

I will tell you how political this has really become. Mike Turpen is the former attorney general of the State of Oklahoma and, by the way, he is also

the former chairman of the Oklahoma Democratic Party. Mike Turpen, when it was announced that Scott Pruitt was going to be tapped to be head of the EPA, released this statement:

Oklahoma Attorney General Scott Pruitt is a good choice to head up the Environmental Protection Agency. I am convinced Scott Pruitt will work to protect our natural habitats, reserves and resources. His vision for a proper relationship between protection and prosperity makes him superbly qualified to serve as our next EPA administrator.

That is from the former head of the Oklahoma Democratic Party.

So far, my colleagues have found a good reason for every Cabinet nominee to delay, delay, delay. This has now been the slowest confirmation process for any President since George Washington. The tradition has always been that the President won an election, and he should be able to hire his own staff and his own Cabinet and get busy going to work. That is what the American people asked him to do.

Scott Pruitt deserves an up-or-down vote, and he deserves our trust to be able to take on and follow the law, doing what the EPA requires him to do.

Scott Pruitt is a friend. I understand that some of the folks who have attacked him have only met him at a hearing or read about him on some blog site. But I have prayed with Scott. I have seen Scott struggle with the hard decisions that affect our State’s future. I have seen Scott listen to people from all sides of an issue, and I have seen him take difficult stands. I think he will be an excellent EPA Administrator, and I think he will make some wise choices to not only protect what is happening now but to be able to help protect us for the future.

You see, Scott is a husband and a dad as well, and he cares also about the future of our country. I think he is going to go after it, and he will be able to be an excellent Administrator in the days ahead.

TRIBUTE TO BRYAN BERKY

Mr. President, I would like to take a quick moment just to be able to reflect. I have a staff member named Bryan Berky. He is running off. He has been quite a leader. He is leaving us to be able to take on a new task and a new role.

Since 2010, he has been a tremendous asset to the Senate. Bryan Berky is a student of Senate procedures. He is the one in the office whom everyone wishes they had because, when something comes up and someone has some novel new idea of how the rules work, he is typically the one on the corner saying: Yes, that really won’t work, and here is why.

He has been sharp on budget issues, on tax issues, and efficiency in government. He has been the one who has been passionate about the national debt—and not just talking about national debt but actually trying to solve it.

You see, Bryan Berky is one of those unique staffers not trying to make a

point. He is trying to actually solve the problem.

He was mentored by a guy named Dr. Tom Coburn, who wasn't too bad on those issues himself. He has led well, and I am proud that he has been on my staff.

As he leaves from the Senate, he will be sorely missed by this whole body—even by people who never met him. He had an impact, based on the things that he worked on.

If you want to get a chance to visit with Bryan Berky, though, you can talk about Senate procedures, tax policy, and nerdy budget issues or you can chat with him about Oklahoma State football. He spent his time through college working for the Oklahoma State football team, watching the films and breaking down every single play, preparing the team for practice and for the game days.

He is a great student of people and of process.

I just want to be able to pass on to the Presiding Officer that there is a guy named Bryan Berky who is leaving the Senate in the next week, and he will be sorely missed by this Senate and by our team in the days ahead.

With that, I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

MR. BENNET. Mr. President, last year was the hottest year on record, and 16 of the last 17 years have been the warmest years ever recorded. Climate change science is some of the most thoroughly established and well-tested research in history, and 97 percent of the published research says climate change is real and caused by humans.

Climate change is an urgent threat to our health, our national security, and our economy. How we address it is what we need to debate, not whether it is real.

As I have said before, I will work with anyone in this Chamber—Republican or Democrat—to address this issue. That is appropriate because survey after survey of people in Colorado—a State that is a third Democratic, a third Republican, and a third Independent—demonstrates that they believe the science, no matter which party they belong to.

In a very welcome sign, just last week, a group of statesmen, including former Secretary of State James Baker III, former Secretary of State George Shultz, and former Secretary of the Treasury Henry Paulson, Jr.—all Republicans—released what they described as a “conservative climate solution.”

These distinguished leaders have come together at just the right moment—at the perfect moment—because our new President says that he is “not a big believer” in climate change. In fact, he claimed during the campaign that climate change was a hoax invented by the Chinese to make U.S. manufacturing noncompetitive.

Consistent with that view, the President's nominee to run the Environ-

mental Protection Agency, Scott Pruitt, recently said that the debate over climate change is quote “far from settled.” He wondered in December whether global warming is “true or not,” whether it is caused by humans and whether the Earth is cooling instead of heating. As attorney general of Oklahoma, he sought to prevent the very Agency he has been nominated to lead from fighting climate change, suing the EPA 14 times.

It is important, I guess, to note that while it is rare for somebody in America to share these views, Attorney General Pruitt is not alone in his extreme views in the new President’s Cabinet. Rick Perry, the nominee to be Secretary of Energy, wrote in his book that climate science is “all one contrived phony mess” and that the Earth is actually “experiencing a cooling trend.” Ben Carson, the nominee to run the Department of Housing and Urban Development, said: “It is not clear if temperatures are going up or going down.” Rex Tillerson, the new Secretary of State, said: “None of the models agree on how climate change works.” Mr. Trump’s CIA Director, Mike Pompeo, said: “There are scientists who think lots of different things about climate change.”

When the Pope was talking about the importance of addressing climate change, which he said was a very real threat, there was an American politician who said that the Pope should stick to religion and that he wasn’t a scientist. In fact, the Pope studied chemistry. I am glad he is using his voice on this important issue.

To be clear, some nominees seem to have undergone a confirmation process evolution on climate, but this seems more an effort to hide their extreme views in an effort to be confirmed rather than a genuine conversion based on facts or science, and that is a shame because the world cannot wait for this administration to stop ignoring the science.

Over the past 150 years, human activity has driven up greenhouse gas levels in our atmosphere higher and faster than at any time over the last 400,000 years. That is not surprising because we have pumped almost 400 billion metric tons of carbon into the atmosphere since the start of the Industrial Revolution. As a result, carbon dioxide concentrations have risen from 280 parts per million to 400 parts per million for the first time in recorded history. That significant change over an insignificant period of time is dramatically changing the Earth. These emissions act like closed car windows: They allow light and heat in, but they don’t allow most of the heat to ever escape.

Already, record heating has melted ice sheets as large as Texas, Georgia, and New York combined, adding billions of tons of water to our oceans every year. These rising seas have partially submerged cities in Florida and Georgia several times per year. They threaten 31 towns and cities in Alaska

with imminent destruction. They are forcing a city in Louisiana to relocate its residents away from what is now an almost permanently flooded coast. By 2030, there won’t be any glaciers left in Montana’s Glacier National Park.

While extreme events and natural disasters become more frequent, so do the effects climate change has on our daily lives. In my home State, 7 out of 10 Coloradans know that climate change is happening, and nearly half say they have personally experienced its effects. Shorter winters are already a threat to Colorado’s \$4.8 billion ski and snowboard industry and its 46,000 jobs.

Since the snow is melting sooner, there is not enough water for what are now longer summers. Colorado’s farmers are forced to grow food with less water, a changing growing season, and higher temperatures. Our agriculture industry employs over 170,000 Coloradans and contributes more than \$40 billion a year to our economy. These changes are not only threatening farmers’ livelihoods, they are changing production and food prices at grocery stores.

Our beer industry is even weighing in. This week, I received a letter from 32 brewers from around the country, including three from Colorado, who oppose Scott Pruitt’s nomination because they depend on America’s clean water resources to brew their beer.

Hotter summers and the droughts they prolong cause wildfires that now burn twice as much land every year than they did 40 years ago. Together, State and Federal agencies are paying nearly \$4 billion a year to fight those fires. Warmer waters and drought are hurting animals everywhere, like our cutthroat trout populations in Colorado. That is not just a problem for the fish; in Colorado, rivers generate more than \$9 billion in economic activity every year, including supporting nearly 80,000 jobs.

As warmer temperatures increase and spread across regions, so do incidents of vector-borne diseases like the West Nile virus and the hantavirus. And what do we do when we have longer, hotter summers? We crank up the air-conditioning, burning more fossil fuel and only perpetuating the problem.

I understand that sometimes it is hard to focus on climate change when the effects seem distant, but it should be impossible to ignore the immediate national security threat posed by climate change that is here today. Here in the Senate, in 2015, we passed a budget amendment with bipartisan support to promote “national security by addressing human-induced climate change.” That is what the amendment said. It got bipartisan support.

The former Secretary of Defense, the former Director of National Intelligence, and the former admiral in charge of U.S. Naval forces in the Pacific have all warned us that climate change is a threat to our national security.

Around the world, climate change is increasing natural disasters, refugee flows, and conflicts over basic resources like food and water, complicating American involvement and security. Climate change is linked to drought and crop loss and failure in southern Africa, leaving more than 6 million children malnourished by famine. It is increasing monsoons and heat waves in Pakistan, driving 11 million people out of their homes. It is even connected to water and food shortages that have intensified civil unrest from Egypt to Syria.

At home, climate change already has cost us billions to relocate and buffer military infrastructure from coastal erosion and protect military installations from energy outages. At the U.S. Atlantic Fleet in Norfolk, VA, the largest naval installation in the world, sea levels have risen over 1 foot in the past 100 years. All the systems that support military readiness, from electrical utilities to housing at that base, are vulnerable to extreme flooding.

When the Department of Defense “recognizes the reality of climate change”—those are their words—“and the significant risk it poses to U.S. interests globally,” we should listen. When the Nation’s most recent national security strategy says that “climate change is an urgent and growing threat,” we should act.

As a Senator from Colorado, I understand very well why people sometimes are frustrated when the EPA, for instance, does take action—or sometimes when it doesn’t take action.

There are certainly some regulations that don’t make sense, where a well-intentioned idea or an ill-intentioned idea—I think they are usually well-intentioned—from Washington ends up not making sense when it hits the ground. That is why I fought to revise EPA fuel storage tank regulations that hurt Colorado farmers, ranchers, and businesses in my home State. I supported an amendment making the Agency take a look at a new regulation that burdens families trying to remodel older homes. There are other regulations that I voted to get rid of. I supported, for instance, lifting the export ban on crude oil from the United States of America, a bill that we passed last year in connection with a 5-year extension of the tax credits for wind and solar energy, a great deal for the State of Colorado—both the lifting of the crude oil export ban and the extension of the tax credits for wind and solar.

I have also supported and fought for our coal community. In Colorado, working with my colleague Senator GARDNER, I fought to keep a Colorado mine open to protect good-paying jobs in my State. I am proud to have a hard hat in my office bearing the signatures of the people who work at that mine.

I have to say tonight that the often-asserted claim that efforts to regulate carbon or more generally to protect our water and our air have signifi-

cantly led to job losses in this country is false. This argument is a fraud perpetrated by politicians making promises that are broken from the start.

The reality—and it is important to understand the reality so we can remedy the situation—the reality is that free market forces and not mostly Federal regulation are transforming American electricity production.

American coal employment peaked in the early 1980s, long before we began seriously expanding natural energy. Natural gas has been gaining market share compared to coal since before 1990. Colorado, for example, has benefitted greatly from the natural gas boom. In almost every part of the United States, natural gas plants are now cheaper to build than coal plants. Facilities that were built when I became a Senator 8 years ago were built to import natural gas and are now being retrofitted to export natural gas to the rest of the world. That is good for our environment, and it is good for the geopolitical position of the United States.

Innovation is making renewable electricity more affordable for everybody. Between 2008 and 2015, the cost of wind power fell 41 percent. The cost of large-scale solar installations fell 64 percent. This has led to a 95-percent increase in solar deployment in 2016 over the previous year. The annual installation doubled in 1 year.

If we truly want to support our world communities, we should listen to Teddy Roosevelt, who once said that “conservation and rural-life policies are really two sides of the same policy; and down at the bottom this policy rests upon the fundamental law that neither man nor nation can prosper unless, in dealing with the present, thought is steadily given to the future.”

The truth about the future is that there may be a lot of sound reasons to review, revisit, and even retire any number of Federal regulations, and I will bet there are, but cutting regulation will not reopen shuttered coal mines.

It is not about regulations or the EPA or about a War on Coal. Economic factors, market factors are driving the shift from coal to natural gas and renewables, and we need to recognize this shift and help coal communities adapt to a changing energy economy. They have contributed to building the economic vitality of this country. Their work helped us win World War II. We have to recognize the contribution; we can’t just turn our backs. But we also need to acknowledge what is causing the changes that are occurring in our energy production because if we can’t acknowledge the causes, we can’t fix the problem; we can’t make a meaningful difference for people in the communities that are affected by these changes; we can’t fulfill what have become empty political promises instead of making real commitments on behalf of the American people.

We also have to take advantage of the changes in energy production to fuel economic growth and create new jobs. Already, renewable energy is creating jobs throughout the country. Energy efficiency employs 2.2 million Americans. Solar and wind companies employ more than 360,000 Americans, including more than 13,000 in my home State of Colorado. Colorado now ranks first in the country in wind energy manufacturing. All together, clean energy employment grew 29 percent between 2009 and 2014 in Colorado.

This isn’t a Bolshevik plot, as I said on the floor before. These are American jobs. These are manufacturing jobs. These are plants where it is not just about the wind turbine but about all of the supply chain that goes along with it that can’t be made in China and shipped to the United States and installed here. These jobs in this supply chain are American jobs. They are good jobs that pay a good wage, and they are meaningful to our economy. Last year, solar jobs grew 17 times faster than jobs in the rest of the national economy. They increased by 20 percent in Colorado in 1 year.

The expansion of natural gas, as I mentioned earlier, is also aiding our transition to a cleaner energy economy. Between 2005 and 2012, natural gas production grew by 35 percent in the United States. In Colorado, it expanded by 139 percent. Colorado now ranks sixth in the country in natural gas production as 10 of the Nation’s 100 largest natural gasfields are now located in Colorado.

These industries together create good-paying jobs that can’t be exported overseas; and all of these changes, taken together, are beginning to address climate change. From 2008 to 2015, the American energy sector reduced its carbon emissions by 9.5 percent. We reduced our carbon emissions by almost 10 percent while the country’s economy grew by more than 10 percent, and we are starting to see the same trend around the world. Global emissions stayed flat in 2015 while the global economy grew. Turning our backs on reality is not a recipe for job creation in this country, but embracing the reality is.

So I would ask this new President, after the campaign he ran and the promises he made, why he would promote policies that will kill American jobs and industries. Unfortunately—I regret to say this—even though 70 percent of Coloradans say climate change is real and that humankind is contributing to it, the answer to my question about this administration’s policies comes back to what it believes—to what it believes is a debate on climate change.

If we allow science to become debatable, we can contort our thinking to fit any fiction at all to support or undermine any public policy. We risk discarding facts we don’t like and ignoring experts with whom we don’t agree in favor of special interests, which

often dominate our political system. Our country needs more from us than that. Our national defense demands more than that from us.

When State Department analysts concluded with evidence, with science, that the Keystone Pipeline would not materially increase carbon emissions—facts lost in the phony debate here in Washington—I voted for it against intense opposition from my own party and many of my strongest supporters. That was a painful vote, one of the most painful I have ever taken and difficult to explain to many people I admire, but I was guided by the facts, not by politics, guided by the science, not by politics.

We have always drawn strength as a country from our belief in science, our confidence in reason and evidence. It is what Harry Truman called our “unflinching passion for knowledge and truth.” In school, we teach children to support theories with facts and look to science to explain the world. When it comes to climate change, we cannot allow the narrow limits of political expediency and special interests to cloud our sound judgment. That is not a lesson we should be teaching our children who need us to act on climate. That would set a horrible example for the people who are coming after us.

Our ultimate success in addressing climate change will rely on the same scientific method that sent us to the Moon and eradicated smallpox. If we surrender evidence to ideology, when it comes to climate change, we abandon the process of scientific inquiry. We leave ourselves completely unequipped to defend what we discover to be true. We loosen our grip on the science that allows us to understand that evolution is real and vaccines are effective; that something is true and something else is false. That, not doubt and denial, is the lesson we should leave our children; that we have the courage to confront this challenge without bias; that we have the wisdom to follow facts wherever they lead. That is what this Senate should do. That is what our country should do.

We have seen the evidence now. It is not theoretical anymore that we can grow our economy, the fact that we will grow our economy, that we can conserve energy while we do it, that we can create entirely new industries and technologies to power the most significant economy that human beings have ever seen in the history of the world, and that we can deal with climate at the same time. The two are linked.

Apparently, that is not what this President believes, and that is not what his nominee to be Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency believes. Because that is so far out of step with what Colorado believes and for all of the reasons I have talked about today and for the sake of our climate and for good-paying American jobs all over this country—but particularly in Colorado—I am compelled to vote no on the President's nominee to

head the Environmental Protection Agency.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Ms. WARREN. Mr. President, I rise to express my strong opposition to President Trump's nomination of Scott Pruitt to be the next Administrator for the Environmental Protection Agency.

The reason is simple. In a choice between corporate polluters and people who want to breathe air and drink water, Scott Pruitt sides with the corporate polluters. He has no business being the head of the EPA.

During his nomination hearing, Mr. Pruitt had countless opportunities to answer for his record. His responses were flippant, evasive, and outright misleading. He has been asked repeatedly to provide records from his office concerning dealings with big oil companies, but he told the Senators that, hey, they should submit an open records request, hoping that his confirmation would be over long before those documents would see the light of day.

Just a few hours ago, an Oklahoma district court judge ordered a dose of sunshine for Mr. Pruitt's dirty dealings from his perch as attorney general of Oklahoma. The judge has demanded that Mr. Pruitt cough up more than thousands of emails pertaining to his cozy relationship with Big Oil—emails he has been hiding from Oklahoma open records requests for over 2 years, but the Republican leadership is not interested in waiting. Its plan is to jam this nomination through tomorrow—4 days before the emails are slated to become public.

Are you kidding me?

If those emails show corruption, every Senator should have that information before—not after—they vote to put someone in charge of the EPA who may be there for years.

Clean air and clean water used to be a nonpartisan issue. In earlier decades, leaders in both parties had the courage to say no to suffocating smog and towering plumes of toxic chemicals poisoning our children. Republicans and Democrats came together, and together they declared that access to clean air and clean water was a basic right for all Americans. We passed the Clean Air Act, and we passed the Clean Water Act. We updated those laws when necessary, and we did those things together.

Together, we depend on the Environmental Protection Agency for three critical reasons: The EPA is the cop on the beat, protecting American families from corporate polluters that would put profit ahead of safety. It watches out for us and for our children; the EPA exists because pollution knows no State borders. What is burned at the powerplant in Ohio is breathed by children across Massachusetts; and the EPA takes on the ever-changing task of researching, monitoring, and regulating toxic emissions because the job

is far too great for any one State to tackle.

To do all of this, the EPA routinely turns to local governments, businesses, and innovative workers for local solutions; the EPA turned to the University of Massachusetts to create a research center to assist smalltown water systems; the EPA turned to towns along Cape Cod and on Martha's Vineyard to pursue innovative solutions to increase coastal resiliency as sea levels have risen; and the EPA recently recognized New Bedford's exceptional work in monitoring industrial waste discharge in the city's collection system.

Across Massachusetts and across the Nation, the EPA sets big national goals that help inspire ingenious local solutions. The EPA is one of our great successes as a nation, but that success has not come without a fight. Each time the EPA has taken a step to clean our air, industry has poured more and more money into the debate, yelling that regulation is just too costly and that companies can never survive if they have to clean up their act.

In the 40 years following the Clean Air Act, emissions of common air pollutants fell nearly 70 percent while the number of private sector jobs doubled. Industry talks about the costs of pollution controls because dirty is cheap. Clean air saves more than 160,000 lives each year. Clean air saves more than 3 million schooldays our children would have collectively lost. Clean air saves 13 million workdays the hard-working, healthy Americans simply can't afford to miss.

Scott Pruitt doesn't measure success by this yardstick. No. He measures success by how happy his corporate donors are. As Big Oil's go-to attorney general from Oklahoma, Pruitt has spent the last 6 years trying to silence the life-saving, data-driven work of dedicated EPA employees and scientists. And now, those big polluters have their fantasy EPA nominee—someone who will work on their side and not on the side of the American people.

How about a couple of examples. When EPA issued a rule to limit mercury, arsenic, and other toxic chemical emissions from coal powerplants, Mr. Pruitt questioned whether mercury poses a health hazard. Mercury is a well-known neurotoxin. It means that it poisons the nervous system. And Scott Pruitt thinks he should question whether it poses any health hazard. Wow.

Or maybe it is this example. When the EPA moved to reduce leaks of methane, a greenhouse gas that is 30 times more potent than CO₂, he turned the Oklahoma AG's office into a clearinghouse for big oil to pursue lawsuits attacking the EPA. Scott Pruitt has spent so much time with his campaign donors that he honestly appears incapable of understanding the difference between the financial interests of millionaires who run giant oil companies and the health and well-being of the 4

million human beings who actually live in Oklahoma.

The people need a voice more than ever. For generations, Oklahoma has had very few earthquakes. Then, oil companies decided to up production, to pull every last drop of oil out of the ground. But with every drop of oil came useless, toxic radioactive salt water waste, and it has to go somewhere. So they took the cheapest option available: Pump billions of barrels of wastewater deep underground, under immense pressure, and that is when the problems started. Suddenly, earthquakes—big earthquakes with a magnitude of 3.0 and above, started occurring every day across Oklahoma.

Here was Mr. Pruitt, the State attorney general, the people's lawyer. What did he do? Did he seek relief for the families that were stiffed by insurance companies? Did he join residents who were suing to stop the drilling while their homes crumbled? Did he even pretend to do something—you know, like maybe issue a strongly worded press release supporting frightened citizens? No, not Mr. Pruitt. No, Mr. Pruitt stood by his friends in the oil industry, and the heck with everybody else.

Mr. Pruitt has been consistent in his work for big oil. As attorney general, he dismantled the environmental protection unit in his office—dismantled the environmental protection unit. He appointed a billionaire oil man to be his 2014 campaign chair, and he ignored the citizens he was sworn to protect. That is the measure of Mr. Pruitt as a public servant.

A State attorney general is supposed to serve the people. Right now, Massachusetts attorney general Maura Healey is leading the case to prove that ExxonMobil deliberately deceived the public about the impact of climate change on our economy, our environment, our health, and our future. Good for Maura. Did Scott Pruitt join that suit? Of course not. Pruitt ran to the defense of one of the world's largest corporations, whining about how that corporation felt bullied. Instead of working as the attorney general for Oklahoma, Mr. Pruitt has served as the attorney general for Exxon.

Finally, Scott Pruitt has the nerve to say that the cause of climate change is "subject to more debate." More debate? We had that debate in the 1980s, in the 1990s, in the 2000s. Maybe Mr. Pruitt missed it, buried under a pile of big oil money.

So let me just offer a summary. For well over a century, we spewed fossil fuel filth into our atmosphere. And, yes, this allowed us to fuel the thirsty appetite of our 20th century economy. But that blistering pace came at a price.

Our planet is getting hotter. Our coasts are threatened by furious storm surges that sweep away homes and devastate our largest cities. Our poorest neighborhoods are one bad storm away from being under water. Our naval bases are under attack—not by enemy

ships but by rising seas; droughts and wildfires are all too familiar across the country. Refugees are fleeing homes that are no longer livable. And the risk of rapidly spreading diseases like malaria and Zika is on the rise.

Our coastal communities don't have time for politicians who deny science. Our farmers don't have time for more debate. Our children don't have time for more cowards who will not stand up to big oil companies defrauding the American people.

Scott Pruitt has been working hard for big oil to dismantle the EPA, and now, President Trump wants to give him that chance.

Where are the Senators who will stand up for the health, the welfare, and the safety of their citizens? Where are the Senators who will stand up for the people's right to breathe clean air and drink clean water? Where are the Senators who will have the courage to demand action on climate change so that our children will have a chance to inherit a livable Earth?

In the end, despite this despicable record, if the Republicans link arms again, there will not be enough of us to stop this nomination. But make no mistake, if President Trump wants a fight over the health of our children, a fight over the creation of clean energy jobs, a fight over the very future of our planet, then we will fight every step of the way.

We will fight alongside moms and dads who know the terror of a childhood asthma attack. We will fight alongside the cancer victims. We will fight alongside the fishermen and the hunters. We will fight alongside the families of Flint, MI, and everywhere else in America where families cannot safely turn on their water taps or step outside and take a deep breath.

We are all in this together.

People in Massachusetts care deeply about preserving a safe and healthy environment for our kids and our grandkids. We see it as a moral question. And I receive letters from people all across the State, describing how important clean air and clean water are to them and how worried they are about what Scott Pruitt leading the EPA will mean for our most vital natural resources. I hear those concerns and I share those concerns.

I would like to read just a few of the many letters that I have received about this nomination.

Edward from Dennis wrote to me on behalf of the Association to Preserve Cape Cod about the importance of the EPA to coastal communities in Massachusetts. Here is Edward's letter:

The Association to Preserve Cape Cod (APCC), the Cape Cod region's leading non-profit environmental education and advocacy organization, writes to state our strong opposition to the appointment of Oklahoma Attorney General Scott Pruitt for the position of Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency. We urge you to vote against his nomination.

APCC is deeply concerned that Mr. Pruitt's record of vigorously opposing the efforts of

the EPA to protect the nation's water and air quality is in direct conflict with his responsibilities as EPA Administrator to ensure that the agency's important work continues. In fact, his record clearly shows that his loyalties side with polluters instead of with the environment and the welfare of the American people. Of particular concern is Mr. Pruitt's refusal to accept the science of climate change and the implications this has for EPA's ongoing efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

In addition, the EPA has most recently played a vital role in furthering efforts to protect and restore water quality through its Southeast New England Program (SNEP) for Watershed Restoration, a program that has greatly benefited coastal communities in Rhode Island and southeastern Massachusetts. We worry that important initiatives such as the SNEP program, which was originally proposed by Senator REED with the strong support from each of you, will be in jeopardy under the oversight of Mr. Pruitt, should he be confirmed as EPA Administrator.

The New England states, as well as the entire nation, have made significant strides forward in addressing the protection of our air and water. However, much more needs to be accomplished. With so much at stake, we cannot afford to step backward in our effort to protect the environment. We, therefore, urge you to oppose the nomination of Mr. Pruitt for EPA Administrator.

Thanks, Edward, for writing, and thanks to all of you at the Association to Preserve Cape Cod for the work you are doing every single day. It makes a real difference.

While all sorts of people have written to my office about Mr. Pruitt, I have noticed that a lot of people are writing in about kids—their kids, kids they work with, or just kids in general. My constituents are concerned about Scott Pruitt's commitment to protecting the air our kids breathe and the water they drink, and I share those concerns.

I heard from Mary in Worcester, who is concerned about the effects of environmental toxins like lead on children. She is concerned both as a parent and as a family doctor. Here is what Mary had to say:

With so much focus in Washington on ensuring politicians are held to a strong ethical standard, I ask you to oppose the nomination of Scott Pruitt as EPA Administrator. I wrote to you yesterday asking the same, but after the hearing yesterday, it is increasingly clear that Mr. Pruitt is unfit.

In addition to being a parent, I am also a Family Medicine physician. Rarely, I see children who are exposed to lead through environmental sources. This is rare because lead has been regulated, and as such rates of lead poisoning, and the accompanying irreversible brain damage, have plummeted.

But yesterday Mr. Pruitt revealed that he knows nothing about this issue, responding to Senator Cardin, "Senator, that is something I have not reviewed nor know about."

I continue to ask you to oppose him and to encourage colleagues to do the same.

Thank you for writing, Mary. That is why I am here tonight—to encourage my colleagues to oppose him.

I heard from Elizabeth in Belchertown, as well. Here is what she wrote:

As a resident of MA and a teacher of AP Environmental Science in a public high

school in western MA, I am writing to express my concern about the appointment of Scott Pruitt as director of the EPA. He appears to be the exact opposite of the qualifications and perspective of a person who should have that position. As you know, he has close ties to fossil fuels, has repeatedly sued the EPA, avoided mercury legislation, and espoused the belief that the EPA is too powerful. I urge you to work with other Senators to block this appointment.

Thank you, Elizabeth. The work that you are doing, that teachers are doing, is more vital than ever now, and I share your concerns. Thank you.

A man from Boston wrote to me with concerns about Scott Pruitt's ties to fossil fuel companies, and here is what he said:

As a constituent who cares about our environment, I want you to know I am deeply concerned about the nomination of Scott Pruitt to lead the Environmental Protection Agency.

Scott Pruitt is firmly in the pocket of the oil and gas industry. He is not concerned with the world we leave for our children. As a father and an educator, I am fighting his nomination because I have a responsibility to care about the world I leave children and not merely the wealth my cronies accumulate.

Pruitt has actively worked to dismantle protections for clean air and clean water that people and birds need to thrive. The EPA must adhere to science and support common-sense solutions for ensuring a healthy environment and stable climate for people and wildlife.

Please oppose confirming Scott Pruitt and demand a nominee instead who will represent the vast majority of Americans—regardless of party affiliation—who support strong action and safeguards for our air, water, and climate.

I couldn't agree more with what he said.

Wendy from Newton wrote to me about the concerns as well. Here is what she had to say:

Dear Senator, I am appalled and scared by the possibility of Scott Pruitt to head the EPA. It will be disgraceful if he is confirmed. To appoint someone who stands against everything that agency is for is cynical, disrespectful and dangerous in this urgent time of climate change. Now more than ever we need a strong EPA that believes in science and will protect us from environmental disaster. I hope you will do everything you possibly can to fight against Pruitt getting confirmed.

Thank you for writing.

I also heard from Arlene in Wayland, who is worried about what the future of the EPA means for her two grandchildren. Here is what she had to say:

Senator Warren, please assure your constituents that you will not support Scott Pruitt's nomination to head the EPA. Mr. Pruitt is an enemy of the agency and of the future of our environment. He has stood in the way of the agency's purpose to protect our air and water. He is ignorant of the findings of climate science and medical studies on toxicity, has dealt dishonestly with Congress, and is so obviously in the pocket of the fossil fuel industry. Please use your considerable persuasiveness and rigor to convince your colleagues in the Senate to ditch his nomination. The future of my two grandchildren depends on it. Thank you.

Thank you for your note, Arlene. I am doing my best, and so are the rest

of the Democrats. We just need some Republicans to help us out here.

Joan from Maynard reached out to me about her experience working with children who have suffered from lead poisoning. Here is what Joan wrote:

I have been an Educational Advocate for children with disabilities for 24 years. I've worked with children who suffer from lead poisoning, and they are heartbreaking. Even the smallest exposure has life-long profound consequences. I haven't personally seen anything the level of what has happened in Flint, MI, but I know that it's a tragedy for a generation of children in Flint.

Pollution of our waters is just one of the risks we face if Scott Pruitt is approved. There are countless more, many evident and others not readily apparent, but ready to unfold. Please, please fight this appointment in every way you can.

Thank you, Joan, for writing and for the important work you do. Believe me, I am fighting in every way I can.

A man from North Falmouth wrote to me, worried that the progress we have made on protecting public health and the future of our planet is in danger. Here is what he said:

Oklahoma Attorney General Scott Pruitt is a lifelong ally of corporate polluters. Pruitt's nomination is a clear threat to the nation's public health and the progress made on common-sense pollution standards. I cannot tolerate the appointment of a fossil fuel cheerleader to lead the nation's environmental protection efforts. In 2014, Pruitt literally acted as a messenger between Devon Energy and the EPA in an attempt to stifle public health protections.

Please continue to defend the Clean Power Plan and methane pollution standards against the influence of the fossil fuel industry. 64% of Americans are concerned about climate change, we deserve a leader who will take action to protect air quality.

Thanks for writing. I really appreciate it.

Since President Trump nominated Mr. Pruitt, I have received hundreds of letters like these from people in Massachusetts who are worried about what he will mean for the environment and for the future of our planet, but I have also heard from the experts, people who understand the ins and outs of the EPA and its mission. Hundreds of former EPA employees who have serious concerns about Mr. Pruitt's record on the environment sent a letter to me and my colleagues here in the Senate. Here is what they wrote:

We write as former employees of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to share our concerns about Oklahoma Attorney General Scott Pruitt's qualifications to serve as the next EPA Administrator in light of his record in Oklahoma. Our perspective is not partisan. Having served under both Republican and Democratic presidents, we recognize each new Administration's right to pursue different policies within the parameters of existing law and to ask Congress to change the laws that protect public health and the environment as it sees fit.

However, every EPA Administrator has a fundamental obligation to act in the public's interest based on current law and the best available science. Mr. Pruitt's record raises serious concerns about whose interests he has served to date and whether he agrees with the longstanding tenets of U.S. environmental law.

Our nation has made tremendous progress in ensuring that every American has clean air to breathe, clean water to drink and uncontaminated land on which to live, work and play. Anyone who visits Beijing is reminded of what some cities in the U.S. once looked like before we went to work as a people to combat pollution. Much of the EPA's work involves preserving those gains, which should not be taken for granted. There are also emerging new threats as well as serious gaps in our environmental safety net, as the drinking water crisis in Flint, Michigan, painfully demonstrates.

Our environmental laws are based on a partnership that requires EPA to set national standards and give states latitude when implementing them so long as certain minimum criteria are satisfied. This approach recognizes that Americans have an equal right to clean air and water, no matter where they live, and allows states to compete for business without having to sacrifice public health or environmental quality.

Our environmental laws include provisions directing EPA to allow for a "margin of safety" when assessing risks, which is intended to limit exposure to pollutants when it is reasonable to expect they may harm the public health, even when all the scientific evidence is not yet in. For example, EPA's first Administrator, Bill Ruckelshaus, chose to limit the amount of lead in gasoline before all doubt about its harmfulness to public health was erased. His actions spared much of the harm that some countries still face as a result of the devastating effects of lead on human health. Similarly, early action to reduce exposure to fine particle pollution helped avoid thousands of premature deaths from heart and lung disease. The magnitude and severity of those risks did not become apparent until much later.

Mr. Pruitt's record and public statements strongly suggest that he does not share the vision or agree with the underlying principles of our environmental statutes. Mr. Pruitt has shown no interest in enforcing those laws, a critically important function for EPA. While serving as Oklahoma's top law enforcement officer, Mr. Pruitt issued more than 50 press releases celebrating lawsuits to overturn EPA standards to limit mercury emissions from power plants, reduce smog levels in cities and regional haze in parks, clean up the Chesapeake Bay and control greenhouse emissions.

In contrast, none of Mr. Pruitt's many press releases refer to any action he has taken to enforce environmental laws or to actually reduce pollution. This track record likely reflects his disturbing decision to close the environmental enforcement unit in his office while establishing a new litigation team to challenge EPA and other federal agencies. He has claimed credit for an agreement to protect the Illinois River that did little more than confirm phosphorus limits established much earlier, while delaying their enforcement another three years.

In a similar vein, Mr. Pruitt has gone to disturbing lengths to advance the views and interests of business. For example, he signed and sent a letter as Oklahoma Attorney General criticizing EPA estimates of emissions from oil and gas wells, without disclosing that it had been drafted in its entirety by Devon Energy. He filed suit on behalf of Oklahoma to block a California law requiring humane treatment of poultry. The federal court dismissed the case after finding that the lawsuit was brought not to benefit the citizens of Oklahoma but a handful of large egg producers perfectly capable of representing their own interests. To mount his challenge to EPA's rules to reduce carbon pollution from power plants, he took the unusual step of accepting free help from a private law firm. In contrast, there is little or

no evidence of Mr. Pruitt taking initiative to protect and advance public health and environmental protection in his state.

Mr. Pruitt's office has apparently acknowledged 3,000 emails and other documents reflecting communications with certain oil and gas companies, but has yet to make any of these available in response to a Freedom of Information Act request filed more than two years ago.

Contrary to the cooperative federalism that he promotes, Mr. Pruitt has suggested that EPA should refrain from trying to control pollution that crosses state lines. For example, he intervened to support a Farm Bureau lawsuit that would have overturned a cooperative agreement between five states and EPA to clean up the Chesapeake Bay (the court rejected the challenge). When asked how a state can protect its citizens from pollution that originates outside its borders, Mr. Pruitt said in his Senate testimony that states should resolve these disputes on their own, with EPA providing "informational" support once an agreement is reached. But the 1972 Clean Water Act directs EPA to review state water quality plans, require any improvements needed to make waters "fishable and swimmable," and to review and approve plans to limit pollutant loads to protect water quality. EPA's power to set standards and limit pollution that crosses state lines is exactly what ensures every American clean air and water, and gives states the incentive to negotiate and resolve transboundary disputes.

We are most concerned about Mr. Pruitt's reluctance to accept and to act on the strong scientific consensus on climate change and act accordingly. Our country's own National Research Council, the principal operating arm of the National Academies of Science and Engineering, concluded in a 2010 report requested by Congress that human activity is altering the climate to an extent that poses grave risks to Americans' health and welfare. More recent scientific data and analyses have only confirmed the Council's conclusion and added to the urgency of addressing the problem.

Despite this and other authoritative warnings about the dangers of climate change, Mr. Pruitt persists in pointing to uncertainty about the precise extent of humanity's contribution to the problem as a basis for resisting taking any regulatory action to help solve it. At his Senate confirmation hearing, he stated that "science tells us that the climate is changing, and that human activity in some manner impacts that change. The ability to measure with precision the degree and extent of that impact, and what to do about it, are subject to continuing debate and dialogue, and well it should be." This is a familiar dodge—emphasizing uncertainty about the precise amount of humanity's contribution while ignoring the broad scientific consensus that human activities are largely responsible for dangerous warming of our planet and that action is urgently needed before it is too late.

Mr. Pruitt's indulgence in this dodge raises the fundamental question of whether he agrees with the precautionary principle reflected in our nation's environmental statutes. Faithful execution of our environmental laws requires effectively combating climate change to minimize its potentially catastrophic impacts before it is too late.

The American people have been served by EPA Administrators, Republicans and Democrats, who have embraced their responsibility to protect public health and the environment. Different administrators have come to different conclusions about how best to apply the law in view of the science, and many of their decisions have been challenged in court, sometimes successfully, for either

going too far or not far enough. But in the large majority of cases it was evident to us that they put the public's welfare ahead of private interests. Scott Pruitt has not demonstrated this same commitment.

Thank you for considering our views.

Thank you to all who signed that letter and for the incredibly important work that you have done to protect our environment. I am with you all the way.

Next, I wish to read an article published by The Atlantic that uses Scott Pruitt's actions to critique his appointment to head the EPA. Actions speak volumes louder than words, and his tell a pretty compelling story of exactly how he will lead the Agency. Here is what it says:

While broad strokes of Trump's policies were never in doubt, there was often enough bizarreness to wonder what he would do with the powers of the Environmental Protection Agency.

On Wednesday, those questions were all but settled. Trump has chosen E. Scott Pruitt, the attorney general of Oklahoma, to lead the EPA. . . .

In a certain light, Pruitt is an inspired choice to lead the EPA, as he has made fighting the agency a hallmark of his career. His own website calls him "a leading advocate against the EPA's activist agenda." The significance could not be more clear: As he promised on the trail, Trump will likely use the powers of the presidency and the legal expertise of Pruitt to block or weaken the Obama administration's attempts to fight climate change.

And Trump will be able to try for more than that. For what distinguishes Pruitt's career is not just his opposition to using regulations to tackle climate change, but his opposition to using regulation to tackle any environmental problem at all. Since he was elected Oklahoma's attorney general, in 2010, Pruitt has racked up a sizable record—impressive in its number of lawsuits if not in its number of victories—of suing the EPA.

Many of these suits did not target climate-related policies. Instead, they singled out anti-pollution measures, initiated under presidential administrations, that tend to be popular with the public.

In 2014, for instance, Pruitt sued to block the EPA's Regional Haze Rule. The rule is built on a 15-year old program meant to ensure that air around national parks is especially clear. Pruitt lost his case.

Last year, he sued to block a rule restricting how much mercury could be emitted into the air by coal plants. He lost that, too.

And early in his tenure, he sued to keep the EPA from settling lawsuits brought by environmental groups like the Sierra Club. That one was dismissed.

He has brought other suits against EPA anti-pollution programs—like one against new rules meant to reduce the amount of ozone in the air—that haven't been heard in court yet. While ozone is beneficial to humans high in the atmosphere, it can be intensely damaging when it accumulates at ground level, worsening asthma and inducing premature deaths. The American Lung Association calls it "one of the most dangerous" pollutants in the United States.

All this is not to say that Pruitt has omitted climate regulations from his litigation. His most common target has been the Clean Power Plan, the Obama administration's set of Clean Air Act rules meant to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from power plants. The Clean Power Plan is Obama's main mechanism for pushing the United States to meet its pledge under the Paris Agreement.

Pruitt began suing the EPA to block the Clean Power Plan more than two years ago. Now, Oklahoma is one of the 28 states challenging the agency in court, and it helped succeed in getting the Supreme Court to block the rules in February.

But Pruitt's understanding of the bill seems not entirely legally minded in two significant ways. First, Pruitt's knowledge of global warming appears to be lacking, at best. Earlier this year, for instance, he wrote in the National Review that "scientists continue to disagree about the degree and the extent of global warming and its connection to the actions of mankind."

While this sounds reasonable, it is not true. The overwhelming consensus among scientists who study the Earth is that humans are largely to blame for the planet's warming. Climate scientists understood this to be the case since at least the early 1990s, and since then, scholarly consensus on the issue has only strengthened. The majority of scientists also believe that global warming will be quite harmful; the scientific debate about its "degree and extent" is only about how bad it will be and how soon its consequences will kick in.

Second, Pruitt has worked extremely closely with oil and gas companies in opposing the plan. In one case, a New York Times investigation revealed that Pruitt sent an official letter to the EPA, bearing his signature and letterhead, that had been almost completely written by lawyers at Devon Energy, a major oil and gas company. It was delivered to Pruitt's office by Devon's chief lobbyist.

Energy firms and lobbyists, including Devon, have donated generously to the Republican Attorneys General Association, which Pruitt has led. In interviews after the Times report, Pruitt described the collaboration as a kind of constituent service, saying that Devon is based in Oklahoma City. He agreed with the letter's legal reasoning, he said, so he signed it.

"I don't think there is anything secretive in what we've done," Pruitt told The Oklahoman. "We've been very open about the efforts of my office in responding to federal overreach."

Now Pruitt could be the one doing the federal reaching. Environmental groups immediately condemned Trump's selection of him. "The EPA plays an absolutely vital role in enforcing long-standing policies that protect the health and safety of Americans, based on the best available science," said Ken Kimmell, president of the Union of Concerned Scientists, in a statement. "Pruitt has a clear record of hostility to the EPA's mission, and he is a completely inappropriate choice to lead it."

Once, it had seemed like perhaps Trump—who speaks often of his adoration for clean air and clean water—would bypass those old fights and only target Obama's new climate rules. But with Pruitt leading his EPA, it seems that Trump's administration will act like its GOP predecessors. Whether it is successful depends on the Senate, on the courts, and on how well environmental advocates make their case to the public.

Finally, I wish to share a few excerpts from an in-depth New York Times article that uncovered Scott Pruitt's extensive ties to energy companies. The article clearly explains the massive conflicts of interest that Mr. Pruitt would face as Administrator of the EPA. Here is what it says:

The letter to the Environmental Protection Agency from Attorney General Scott Pruitt of Oklahoma carried a blunt accusation: Federal regulators were grossly overestimating the amount of air pollution

caused by energy companies drilling new natural gas wells in his state.

But Mr. Pruitt left out one critical point. The three-page letter was written by lawyers for Devon Energy, one of Oklahoma's biggest oil and gas companies, and was delivered to him by Devon's chief of lobbying.

"Outstanding!" William F. Whitsitt, who at the time directed the government relations at the company, said in a note to Mr. Pruitt's office. The attorney general's staff had taken Devon's draft, copied it onto state government stationery with only a few word changes, and sent it to Washington with the attorney general's signature. "The timing of the letter is great, given our meeting this Friday with both the E.P.A. and the White House."

Mr. Whitsitt then added, "Please pass along Devon's thanks to Attorney General Pruitt."

The email exchange from October 2011, obtained through an open-records request, offers a hint of the unprecedented, secretive alliance that Mr. Pruitt and other Republican attorneys general have formed with some of the nation's top energy producers to push back against the Obama regulatory agenda, an investigation by the New York Times has found.

Out of public view, corporate representatives and attorneys general are coordinating legal strategy and other efforts to fight federal regulations, according to a review of thousands of emails and court documents and dozens of interviews.

For Mr. Pruitt, the benefits have been clear. Lobbyists and company officials have been notably solicitous, helping him raise his profile as president for two years of the Republican Attorneys General Association, a post he used to help start what he and his allies called the Rule of Law Campaign, which was intended to push back against Washington.

"We are living in the midst of a constitutional crisis," Mr. Pruitt told energy industry lobbyists and conservative state legislators at a conference in Dallas in July, after being welcomed with a standing ovation. "The trajectory of our nation is at risk and at stake as we respond to what is going on."

Mr. Pruitt has responded aggressively and with a lot of helping hands. Energy industry lobbyists drafted letters for him to send to the EPA, the Interior Department, the Office of Management and Budget, and even President Obama, the Times found.

Industries that he regulates have joined him as plaintiffs in court challenges, a departure from the usual role of a state attorney general, who traditionally sues companies to force compliance with state law.

Energy industry lobbyists have also distributed draft legislation to attorneys general and asked them to help push it through state legislatures to give the attorneys general clearer authority to challenge the Obama regulatory agenda, the documents show. And it is an emerging practice that several attorneys general say threatens the integrity of the office.

The message is clear across Massachusetts and across the Nation: Big Oil's go-to attorney general is Scott Pruitt, and he has no business running the EPA. He has proven over and over again that he will put short-term industry profits ahead of the health of our children. This nominee has no interest in protecting every American's right to breathe clean air and drink clean water. We cannot put someone so opposed to the goals of the EPA in charge of that very Agency.

For these reasons, I will be voting no on Scott Pruitt. I urge my colleagues to do the same.

I yield the floor.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. YOUNG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of all nominations on the Secretary's Desk; that the nominations be confirmed; that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order; that any statements related to the nominations be printed in the RECORD; and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

The nominations considered and confirmed are as follows:

NOMINATIONS PLACED ON THE SECRETARY'S DESK

IN THE ARMY

PN16 ARMY nominations (2) beginning Jeremy D. Karlin, and ending Irahama A. Sanchez, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 9, 2017.

IN THE NAVY

PN17 NAVY nomination of Mathew M. Lewis, which was received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record of January 9, 2017.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that of the postcloture debate time under my control, that 60 minutes be yielded to Senator SCHATZ, 60 minutes be yielded to Senator WHITEHOUSE, 35 minutes be yielded to Senator MERKLEY, and 15 minutes be yielded to Senator CANTWELL.

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

The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that of the postcloture debate time under my control, that 50 minutes be yielded to Senator MERKLEY.

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

The Senator from Hawaii.

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, I think it is important to understand what just happened today that makes this debate on Scott Pruitt to lead the EPA so critically important. We call ourselves the world's greatest deliberative body, and that is actually a well-earned reputation. Sometimes we move slowly. Sometimes we move so slowly that it is maddening for both parties and for the American public. There is a reason that the Senate moves slowly. It is because in a lot of instances it has the weightiest decisions that any public official could ever make. In this instance, we are deciding on the person to comply with the Clean Air and the Clean Water Acts, the Endangered Spe-

cies Act, to discharge their duties as the leader of the EPA.

Something happened today that changes this whole debate. In Federal law, there is something called FOIA, the public records law regarding Federal officials. Most State laws have some kind of open records law, and Oklahoma is no different. There was a lawsuit against the Oklahoma attorney general, Scott Pruitt, and it basically said: Listen, you have to disclose the emails between your office and a bunch of energy industry companies. And the context here is absolutely important. Scott Pruitt is not just a person who is bad on the issue of climate; this is a person who is a professional climate denier. This is a person who has made his bones, politically and professionally, trying to undermine all the authorities the EPA possesses. This is a person who is a plaintiff in multiple lawsuits, as the Oklahoma attorney general, against the EPA. This is a person who has not promised to recuse himself when he is running the EPA. So imagine that there are going to be pending lawsuits where he was the plaintiff, and they are going to still be before the EPA. He was asked in committee whether he would recuse himself, because obviously it is preposterous to be both the plaintiff and the defendant in a lawsuit. It just stands to reason. He did not promise to recuse himself.

So this is a person who has an incredibly close, uncomfortably close working relationship with the fossil fuel industry. He may have that as a sincerely held belief, but the Oklahoma State law requires that he disclose whom he is working with. Why is that relevant? Well, he actually had a couple of instances where he has taken language given to him, sent to him by email from oil companies, and he just copied it—select all, copy, drop it, paste it—onto Oklahoma attorney general letterhead, and then transmitted it to the EPA as if it were from the AG's office in Oklahoma. So that is the context.

What did this Federal judge say today? An Oklahoma County district court judge said that according to the Oklahoma Open Records Act—Aletia Haynes Timmons from the district court of Oklahoma instructed Pruitt's office to hand over the emails by close of business next Tuesday.

So here we are, trying to jam through this nomination, and now it makes perfect sense why they wanted to run the clock. They had congressional delegation trips to Munich for the security conference. There were Republicans who were planning to meet with NATO allies. There was another overseas trip of great import. Yet they abandon all other obligations, all other objectives, and they are bound and determined to run this clock until 1 p.m. tomorrow because they need to vote before these emails become disclosed. Tuesday is when we will see these emails. Yet we seem to be in a