and Utica shale, West Virginia is perfectly positioned for a massive increase of economic growth and new jobs.

Natural gas liquids provide the building blocks for many of the products used by our consumers every single day—products ranging from the dashboard in your car or the water bottle that many of us use. Right now, we don't have the right infrastructure in place to store and distribute the building blocks that make up these products. As a result, these valuable resources are being used to generate heat and electricity, instead of being made into consumer products. As Energy Secretary Perry put it, that's like cooking your breakfast over a fire of hundred dollar bills. This represents a huge opportunity to act on this administration's ''America First'' energy policy. It is an opportunity to grow an industry here at home with an American workforce and America's natural resources.

To elevate these issues in Congress, I am proud to serve as the cochair of the bipartisan Senate Chemistry Caucus. We host briefings about the importance of this industry to America's economy and national security. States that may not have robust petrochemical sectors, nonetheless, rely on its products for manufacturing, agriculture, and several other key industries.

For months—I would say more than months, years—I have been advancing the development of an Appalachian natural gas liquids market to improve our storage and distribution capabilities. New drilling technologies have unlocked access to trillions upon trillions of cubic feet of natural gas and their associated liquids in West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Kentucky. Some of our most downtrodden economic areas have this valuable asset right there.

Unpredicted just a decade ago, this asset can create a renaissance in the region's petrochemical industry, but this can only happen if policymakers and the private sector seize this once-in-a-generation opportunity. To do that, we need to create a natural gas liquid storage hub in Central Appalachia. The concept of this new hub is simple. Right now, because we don't have a way to store these liquids, we are unable to fully maximize this resource. That hurts producers, refiners, and our manufacturers in the State of West Virginia, and Ohio, and beyond.

A storage hub and the necessary pipeline infrastructure would create a robust Appalachian market for natural gas liquids. This would have major national benefits, and here is why. Let's think about the hurricane that just occurred and devastated our friends in Texas. The gulf—and particularly Houston and the storage hub at Mont Belvieu, TX—dominate the domestic market there. Hurricane Harvey knocked out as much as 60 percent of that supply. It knocked it offline, and it took a month to get the hub back up and running. By establishing an Appalachian storage hub away from Hurricane Alley, we would add redundancy that protects our economy and our national security. Having all this storage capacity in only one region of the country only drives up production costs for American manufacturers. I would also add that this resource is in Appalachia. Appalachia should have this storage hub to be able to capitalize and create the jobs right in our own neighborhood.

As Appalachia has become a robust producer of natural gas liquids, pipelines that used to flow from the gulf to the Northeast have been reversed. They are now sent to the gulf for storage and refining. It is sent back as ethylene to the interior of the country—often Appalachia itself—and to the Midwest for manufacturing. This back-and-forth obviously drives up prices for the goods you buy every day, from furniture to toys, to cars.

To be clear, development of an Appalachian hub would not come at the expense of the gulf's market. It is a comparative advantage. The Appalachian hub can more efficiently serve many of the domestic manufacturers, while the gulf can expand its export capacity. Besides making the national market more efficient and resilient, an Appalachian market will drive significant development in a region that desperately needs a boost.

A recent study found that the Appalachian States of West Virginia, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Kentucky would see as much as $35.8 million in new capital investment, creating more than 100,000 jobs by 2025 with this new hub.

When Secretary Perry accepted my invitation and visited West Virginia in July, the development of an Appalachian natural gas liquid storage hub and market was a great topic of emphasis. The Secretary met with several business leaders as part of a roundtable discussion to discuss paths forward in developing a regional ethane market. Needless to say, the Secretary saw the obvious benefits of such a project and that the hub could play a key role in the administration's related goals of rejuvenating the Appalachian economy and achieving an ''America First'' energy policy.

The Secretary and I have discussed how best to bring this public-private partnership to life since his visit to West Virginia. I think all of my colleagues—particularly those representing Appalachia—should be as excited about this concept as the Secretary and I are. Several private entities are undertaking that initial development work right now, with interest coming from both domestic and foreign investors.

I have been engaging frequently with Secretary Perry and with Commerce Secretary Ross about making this storage hub a reality. The Trump administration understands the importance of this project to the economies of West Virginia and the region. I appreciate their efforts to help move our State forward beyond the economic disasters we have had over the last several years. I will continue my advocacy for this enormous economic development opportunity and encourage my colleagues—not just from the States I mentioned but all around the country—to join as partners in this effort.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

NOMINATION OF PETER ROBB

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, this morning I drove from Cleveland to Youngstown. I was in Youngstown, OH—Mahoning Valley—at Teamsters Local 377 talking to workers. There were maybe 200 of them in the room, mostly retirees who are in danger of having their pensions cut—pensions they earned over a lifetime of hard work.

To understand how that happens, when workers are at the bargaining table, whether it is Teamsters, electricians, Steelworkers or SCIU, they so often are willing to give up wages today in order to have a secure retirement in 5 years, 10 years, 20 years, 30 years.

That is what these workers chose to do. They chose to give up wages. Whether they worked for Schwebel's in Youngstown, whether they worked for Roadway, over the road, whether they were working for any number of companies, they were willing, at the bargaining table, to give up higher wages today to have money to set aside that was then invested often in Wall Street. We will get to that in a minute. It is bad enough Wall Street squandered those workers' money. It is worse that the government that is supposed to look out for these workers simply isn't doing it. One of the retired workers, Ed Barker, told us: We did our part. Now it is time for Members of Congress to cross party lines and do theirs.

We talk a good game in this body about how we respect workers and respect their work, but I am not sure we always live that. If we really value a hard day's work in this country, we start by keeping our promise to these hard-working Ohioans, Virginians, Montanans, and all over this country. We keep our promise to those hard-working people in our country, but we can't end there. That is just the beginning of what we need to do to ensure that hard work pays off for ordinary Americans.

During his campaign, Candidate Trump made a lot of big promises to workers in Ohio. He ran some of his big rallies across our State. He made big promises to workers in Ohio and across the country. He told them he would put American workers first. Well, the White House today looks like a retreat for Wall Street executives, and many of the people the President has put in charge have a record of doing the opposite of putting American workers first.

That is certainly true of Peter Robb, the nominee to serve as the general counsel of the National Labor Relations Board. Mr. Robb has spent his career working to strip workers of their rights, defend corporations accused of mistreating workers, and he has tried to undermine the watchdog agency he is now seeking to join. He will be working at the National Labor Relations Board, which is supposed to strike a balance and advocate only for American workers. The President's nominee is someone who received a very high salary building his career defending corporations accused of mistreating workers, working to strip workers of their rights, and trying to undermine the NLRB's effort to get a fair shake and build a level playing field for workers.

Someone who views unions and collective bargaining as a threat to be dealt with was primarily the story of Mr. Robb's career, instead of helping to protect the central rights for workers. A person like that has no business serving as the top lawyer for the National Labor Relations Board.

His nomination is just the latest in a long line of evidence that work simply isn't valued in this country the way it used to be. People in Ohio and around the country work harder. They work more days, more hours, longer hours, harder than ever before, and they have less to show for it.

Over the past 40 years, GDP has gone up, corporate profits have gone up, and executive compensation has gone up—all because of the productivity of the American worker, but, fundamentally, the workers haven't shared in the wealth they have created. Again, GDP goes up, profits go up, executive salaries go up, productivity goes up, but workers' wages are stagnant or worse. We know that.

We also know people in this body rarely side with workers in that equation. One major reason the economic growth has not brought higher wages to workers is Americans are less likely to have a union card to protect them. When Americans reminisce about the good jobs that disappeared, I am willing to bet most of those jobs were union.

As manufacturing employment declined, the share of workforce represented by unions declined with it—only more rapidly. I can accept that the workforce is changing, but what we can't accept is more and more of our workers are paid less in wages, have fewer benefits, and have little economic security.

It is no coincidence that over the same timeframe, economic growth in this country has been shared among fewer and fewer Americans. Keep in mind, as the 1 percent gets richer, they take more and more of the profits, they take more of the productivity gains, and workers are left further behind.

We know what will happen with this so-called tax reform that is being considered in the House. They are then going to negotiate it right down the hall here in the majority leader's office the same way they did healthcare. They will be right down the hall in the majority leader's office with lots of lobbyists but no light shone, no public, and no media coverage.

We know what happens. We know what happens with tax reform like that. The rich get richer and the middle class shrinks. That is the story of those Teamsters in Youngstown today. As I walked with the crowd of Teamsters, I spoke with a number of them on the way in and the way out. I asked how long they had driven a truck. Most had driven 30, some 40, and a few 45 years. They worked that hard. They gave up wages today so they would have a pension in the future. Yet, right now, because of Wall Street misfeasance and malfeasance, in large part, and because government, the people in this body don't have the guts to stand up for these workers, we know what has happened to their pensions, and we know what will happen to their pensions if we don't step in and do the right thing come December this year.

We know what will happen with the tax reform bill, again, written down the hall in the majority leader's office—the same thing. The wealthiest 1 percent get richer. The rich get richer and the powerful get more power and what happens is, the middle class shrinks. We know that.

Last week, I was on the floor with many of my colleagues talking about a case before the Supreme Court—Janus v. AFSCME. The case is part of a decades-long attempt to chip away at workers' power in the workplace. Mr. Robb has been part of that effort. The nominee to be the top lawyer at the National Labor Relations Board has been part of the effort to chip away at workers' rights, to continue the demeaning and diminishing role of workers in this country, to suppress wages in this country. He is the person the President of the United States wants to serve as the top lawyer on the National Labor Relations Board.

What is wrong with that picture? He defended corporations accused of discrimination of not paying their workers the paychecks they earned. Imagine, he represented the corporations that tried to keep these workers from getting the paychecks they earned. He worked for an energy company that was working to defeat workers' organizing effort. His own law firm's website brags about how they delayed the election 2 more years.

You know how it works. My colleagues know this. These workers signed a petition. They signed a card, if you will, saying they would like to have a union election. A majority of these workers—probably a majority of 60, 70 percent—signed a card saying they wanted to have a union election. It is a right in this country. It is a right since the 1930s. When President Roosevelt pushed through the National Labor Relations Act, workers received the right to vote on a union. Mr. Robb's company was bragging. They were bragging that they were able to delay the election for 2 years. So maybe they couldn't defeat the workers, but do you know what you do then? You delay the election because you have really good, high-priced lawyers who know how to do this for management, for the corporation.

If you delay the election for a week, for a month, for a quarter, for half a year, for a year, for 2 years, you know what happens. Many of those workers who signed that petition who thought they might have a shot at the union, some of them got fired, some just left, some of them were ready to retire, maybe some of them died. So by the time the election is held, you have pretty much defeated the organizing effort. That is why people like Mr. Robb don't belong at the National Labor Relations Board.

We need someone in this job who wakes up every day ready to defend American workers, not oppress them, not shut them down, not depress their wages. You don't want somebody who has spent his career trying to bring these workers down.

What Mr. Robb doesn't seem to understand is, it is not corporations that drive the economy, it is workers. We grow the economy from the middle class out.

I know you are going to hear a number of my colleagues who support this huge tax break in this tax bill. It is all about cutting the corporate tax so corporations make more money, have higher profits, have higher executive salaries. It will not have anything to do with wages. It never does. No matter how profitable the companies are, they are not willingly giving higher wages to its workers. You are going to hear from these companies. You are going to hear the defenders of these companies come to this body, and they are going to talk about how corporations are driving the economy; that if you give tax breaks to the richest people in the country, it will trickle down and create jobs and increase wages. Well, it hasn't worked that way in the past.

In the 1990s, Bill Clinton grew the economy. He focused the tax breaks in the tax bills on the middle-class workers and grew the economy out from the middle. Twenty-two million net private sector jobs increased during the Clinton years.

The next 8 years, under President Bush 2, the tax cuts all went to the rich, two major tax cuts—not entirely to the rich but overwhelmingly to the rich. For trickle down, zero net increase of private sector jobs. There were 22 million during the Clinton years because he focused on the middle class. There was zero job growth during the Bush years because it was trickle-down economics.

What is going on in the back room in the majority leader's, Senator MCCONNELL's, back office? It is another tax cut for the rich, trickle down, see what happens. The rich get richer, and the middle class shrinks.

What Mr. Robb doesn't understand is, it is not corporations that drive the economy, it is workers. When the workers are doing better, they are buying more things, they are creating more demand, companies sell more products, the economy grows. If work isn't valued, if corporations shortchange workers with the help of lawyers like Mr. Robb, then Americans can't earn their way to a better life for their families no matter how hard they work.

We all know, workers are working harder than ever before. They are working longer hours than ever before. They are more productive. Profits are up. Executive compensation is up. Wages have been flat. What is fair about that? What should we do about that? What we should do about that is not to put people on the National Labor Relations Board who want to do more of the same.

Whenever we face another attack on American workers and their freedom to organize, I think of the words of Pope Francis. He said: ''There is no good society without a good union, and there is no good union that is not reborn every day in the peripheries—that does not transform the disregarded stones of the economy into cornerstones.'' We need laws that reflect the dignity of every discarded stone, of every American working too many hours for too little pay. The last thing we need is another nominee who doesn't value work, another nominee who doesn't respect the Americans who do it, another nominee who always lines up on the side of the richest people in the country and always is working to take rights away from workers, to take wages away from workers, and to take benefits away from workers. That is the story of Mr. Robb's work history in the private sector.

Is that the kind of person you want representing workers and representing the American economy at the National Labor Relations Board? I think not.

I urge my colleagues to listen a little bit more. Go to the Teamsters' hall in Youngstown like I did today. Listen a little more to the Americans we serve. Listen a little less at the country club, to the big corporations trying to squeeze every last penny out of these workers' hands, to squeeze every last penny out of these workers. Reject Mr. Robb's nomination.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session for a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

TRIBUTE TO DR. JOHN LOGAN

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, today I wish to congratulate a dear friend whom I have known for more than 30 years, Dr. John Logan III, of Henderson, KY. John was recently honored by his community for a lifetime of servant leadership. The city dedicated a plaque on the Henderson Riverwalk, which is one of the many landmarks that John had an indispensable hand in building and one I was proud to work with him to help secure. In a surprise ceremony—John thought he was simply going to lunch with a friend—they honored him for decades of philanthropy and service to his community.

The plaque includes a quote from author Margaret Mead, which reads, ''Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.'' These words perfectly encapsulate the impact of my friend John.

John serves as the chief medical officer of the Methodist Hospital in Henderson, where he started working in 1962 specializing in family medicine. A number of years ago, John embarked on a mission to highlight the extraordinary history of the hospital. Because of his tireless work, the successes of this Henderson institution will continue to be remembered for years to come. In addition to his work caring for patients and leading the administration of the hospital, John gives of himself to other aspects of the community.

In 1971, John joined the Family YMCA's capital campaign, working to help the group move from its old home downtown to a much larger facility on 5 acres of land. He has continued to work with the YMCA, making sure that young people in Henderson have a well-equipped facility to enjoy and grow. John also helped establish other community initiatives, including Henderson's Depot Welcome Center and the Methodist Hospital's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit.

In 2012, the Henderson Community College board of directors presented John with an award recognizing his substantial service to the school. Through the years, John has taken a keen interest in the students. He worked with State legislators and community leaders to raise $1 million to support scholarships to the college and to build a fine arts center. His impact will be felt by students for years to come.

John has spent his life giving to others—his community, the Methodist Hospital, and his friends. So many of the projects in Henderson would not have been possible without John's dedicated leadership, and I am immensely proud to call him my friend. His decades of service have truly made Henderson and Kentucky a better place.

I ask all of my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to the selfless work of Dr. John Logan, a remarkable Kentuckian and a wonderful friend.

Mr. President, The Gleaner in Henderson recently published an article on John's career of service. I ask unanimous consent that a copy of the article be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the Gleaner, Oct. 26, 2017]

DR. JOHN LOGAN HONORED FOR LIFETIME OF COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERISM

(By Douglas White)

It's hard to name a community institution in Henderson that Dr. John Logan hasn't helped or been part of creating.

So when it came time to honor his decades of organizing, cheerleading and fundraising for the Henderson community as a whole, city officials picked perhaps the most scenic spot he's had a hand in bringing to reality.

''Every day he wakes up and works to make this community better,'' said Dr. Lee Newberry, one of Logan's colleagues at Methodist Hospital, as a plaque was dedicated Tuesday afternoon at the Seventh Street overlook on the Henderson Riverwalk.

''He's a true example of a servant leader.''

Newberry and other speakers at the event offered a long list of community projects, programs and buildings that Logan has helped make happen.

A few examples include the modern YMCA facilities, the fine arts center on the campus of Henderson Community College, the downtown Depot building, St. Anthony's Hospice, Colonels to College, the Sandefur Center, and currently in the works, the new 1–69 bridge over the Ohio River.

Attorney David Thomason noted, ''Many of those things wouldn't have happened if it hadn't been for John.''

Thomason recalled how Logan pushed for, and got, money inserted into the state budget for Henderson's fine arts center. It came literally at the midnight hour, but with a catch: Henderson would have to find a way to contribute $200,000 to make the bonding a reality.

When asked, in the middle of the night, if Logan could make it happen, he replied quickly: ''You're damned right!''

''He never met a challenge he didn't embrace,'' said Thomason. ''Once he's on board, the ship doesn't sink. In my opinion, he has done more than any other volunteer in the past 50 years.''

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I was necessarily absent for the November 2, 2017, vote on calendar No. 433, confirmation of the nomination of Stephanos Bibas to be U.S. circuit judge for the Third Circuit. I would have voted nay.

REMEMBERING BERNARD SHAW

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, Bernard Shaw devoted his life to supporting Maine's family farms and to preserving our State's agricultural heritage. His recent passing at 88 years of