

her, as I did, and realized she is living in fear, in terror; that her life as she knows it could end tomorrow—and it could—because of the decision by President Trump to end this protection.

All we have asked for—and many of us on a bipartisan basis—is to call up the Dream Act for a vote in the U.S. Senate, to give these young people a chance of the protection of law so they can continue in this country.

Some Republicans have said we need to sit down and talk about border security. I said I would be happy to do that. When I was part of the Gang of 8, we came up with comprehensive immigration reform, and we had an extensive border security plan. Some of the Republican Senators who offered it told me later: We went overboard and you accepted it. We did. We are serious about border security. That is not an issue, but for the senior Senator from Texas, that is not good enough.

I handed him a sheet of paper last week, and I have a copy of it right here, showing him the proposals we are making on border security. I pointed out to him that 12 of the proposals I handed to him were proposals from his own bill for border security. We are serious about this. This is a genuine effort to give border security provisions the enactment of law along with the Dream Act.

So what we hear is that the senior Senator from Texas came to the floor and said: Well, they are just not negotiating in good faith. Well, I have handed him this provision, this proposal. It was a good-faith gesture and a good-faith effort to move us forward, and the only response we had yesterday from the senior Senator from Texas is: What is the hurry? Why should we get it done this year? Why don't we wait until next year?

Well, next year, as we know, means waiting 2 months when it comes to this issue, and that, to me, is the real fear I have—that we will put this off. The uncertainty, the worry, the stress for these young people will continue while we do nothing—nothing.

We don't enact laws here. We do nothing. We give speeches to an empty Chamber and say: Gosh, I wish we had a little more time here to really do some substantive work. We have all the time we need.

I would commend to my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, for goodness' sake, when 76 percent of the American people agree with the Dream Act, when 61 percent of Trump voters agree with the Dream Act, there is no excuse. We need to make it the law of the land.

NATIONAL MONUMENTS DESIGNATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, it was 20 years ago when I was first elected to the Senate. I was asked to consider a bill called the Red Rocks Wilderness Act. I didn't know anything about it. It was a bill that had been offered by Sen-

ator Bill Bradley of New Jersey. He was retiring. I was asked to consider sponsoring this wilderness proposal in the State of Utah. Of course, I said, I am from Illinois, not Utah, and I have never seen this. Well, they asked me to come out and take a look, and I did.

My wife and I went out to take a look at what was known as the Red Rocks Wilderness Area. It is in the southeastern corner of Utah. I had never been there, nor had I ever heard of it before I visited. What an eye-opener, to go there and see this magnificent vista, this incredible landscape that was being proposed for wilderness protection and status.

So over the years, I have reintroduced the bill, the conversation continued, and it wasn't until President Obama took a major share of this area, which is in San Juan County in the southeastern corner of Utah, and designated it in the name of the Bears Ears Monument that we finally achieved protection for this beautiful piece of real estate.

I have been there. It is breathtaking. There are incredible cultural sites there by Native Americans, and it is a great place to visit, to hike, and to enjoy a special piece of America. It is filled with magnificent red rock formations, deep, carved canyons, long mesas, and rock arches. Some of the photos just don't do it justice. We can take a look at some of these, and we can get an idea of the vastness of the area that is affected here.

Then you might take a look at some of the others and realize it includes a lot of cultural and prehistoric settings that were utilized by the Native American people when they called these caves their homes. It has special meaning to the Native American Tribes that are there. Many of them trace their origins to the very people who dwelled in these caves and the structures they built with the loose rocks that we can still see today.

We look at it and think, Well, if you didn't use this, if you didn't preserve it, if you didn't protect it, what would you do with it?

I have spoken with some of the Senators from Utah, and they have readily conceded there is no oil or gas there to be drilled. There may be some uranium processing but very little. I asked them: Why wouldn't you want this area protected? It doesn't have economic value other than the fact that people will come, tourists will come to Utah to see this beautiful place.

I was troubled when President Trump announced he was going to follow Secretary Zinke's recommendation and shrink the proposed Bears Ears Monument as well as another nearby called the Grand Staircase-Escalante. They would reduce the size of the Bears Ears Monument by 85 percent and Grand Staircase-Escalante by 50 percent.

In April, President Trump issued an Executive order requiring the Department of the Interior to preview and review the previous national monument

designations of President Obama. Although Bears Ears and Grand Staircase are the first two targets to be hit by President Trump, this attack on what is known as the Antiquities Act and our national monuments goes far beyond these two sites.

As part of the review, the President and Secretary of the Interior Zinke considered changing every national monument that had been created since 1996, which is more than 50 nationwide. These are areas that have been protected by Presidents of both political parties. It goes back, in fact, to a Republican President, Teddy Roosevelt, who realized it was worth fighting off some of the parochial and economic interests to preserve pieces of America for future generations.

The list that was subject to the Trump order spans the country. It includes the Cascade-Siskiyou in Oregon, Gold Butte in Nevada, Katahdin Woods and Waters in Maine, Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks and Rio Grande in New Mexico, and several marine monuments.

The administration's decisions to shrink Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante goes against continued support for these sites. The Bears Ears Monument was the first monument to be proposed and advocated by the five sovereign Tribal nations: The Hopi, Navajo Nation, Ute Mountain Ute, Pueblo of Zuni, and Ute Indians.

The Tribes sought protection because of the important place Bears Ears has in their cultures. The artifacts within Bears Ears range from 700 to 12,000 years old, providing Tribes with an incredible insight into the sacred history of their ancestral homeland and bolstering their deep spiritual connection to the landscape itself. In total, 30 Native-American Tribes with ancestral, historical, and contemporary ties to the Bears Ears region supported the designation—30.

I might recall, for those who are not students of history—and I am learning—treatment of Native Americans in this region has again raised some serious questions about America's past. It wasn't until 1920 that Native Americans were recognized as citizens of the United States in many of these areas. It wasn't until 1957 that Native Americans were given the right to vote in the State of Utah even though Native Americans had served our country in World War II, such as the Code Talkers, who were honored by President Trump last week. It wasn't until the 1970s that the State of Utah built its first public school on a Tribal area reservation—and only did that after being ordered by the Federal court. The history of our relationship with these Native-American Tribes is one that raises questions about our respect for what they meant to the earliest founding of America and what they mean to us today.

Mr. President, I see the majority leader has taken the floor. I know that under the rules he has priority when it

comes to speaking. I wish to finish my remarks, but if I can have the permission of the Chair by unanimous consent and allow the majority leader to speak and then resume my statement after he is finished.

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

Mr. MCCONNELL. I thank my friend from Illinois.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

NOMINATION OF KIRSTJEN NIELSEN

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, yesterday, the Senate voted to advance the nomination of Kirstjen Nielsen to be Secretary of Homeland Security. Now it is time for us to vote to confirm her so she can get to work for the American people. By confirming Ms. Nielsen's nomination to lead the DHS, this Senate will take a serious step toward strengthening our Nation's security.

Ms. Nielsen will be charged with leading the Department at a critical time. With her understanding of the challenges facing our Nation and her experience in prevention and preparedness, I believe she will excel as the next Secretary of Homeland Security. Her leadership will also help in providing continued assistance to the men and women still suffering from the effects of the recent natural disasters in our country. Our Nation faces a myriad of threats, and I look forward to working with Ms. Nielsen to address each of them.

FUNDING THE GOVERNMENT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, as we all know, we must pass legislation to fund the government before the end of the week. By approving a short-term bill, we can continue the crucial functions of the Federal Government while we work with our colleagues in the House and the Trump administration to finalize a long-term plan.

The temporary funding measure will come before the House soon, and I expect the Senate to consider it shortly thereafter. It is a clean bill, free from any sort of objectionable policy riders. In addition, it includes a provision to assure States of the future of the Children's Health Insurance Program while a bipartisan reauthorization agreement is completed. All Members should be able to support this noncontroversial, short-term legislation.

We will continue working to pass a funding agreement that advances a number of American priorities—something we will be discussing with the President on Thursday, along with Democratic leaders of the House and Senate.

Yesterday, the Senate Democratic leader expressed his opposition to a government shutdown. I certainly agree with him. So I hope he and his fellow Democrats will continue to work with us in good faith to pass this short-term funding bill and maintain the critical functions of the Federal Government.

TAX REFORM BILL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, one final matter. Last night, our colleagues in the House voted to send the tax reform legislation to a conference committee. There, Members from both Chambers will work to resolve the differences in our bills and eventually enable us to send a final product to the President for his signature.

The House's action last night is more progress in our years-long effort to deliver real relief to the men and women we represent. I am grateful to our friends in the House for their willingness to continue working with us to help shift our economy into high gear. I look forward to the Senate voting to join the conference later this week.

In the end, both Chambers will have an opportunity to pass the final legislation to help families keep more of their hard-earned money, to create good jobs, and to jump-start economic growth. I look forward to working with all of our colleagues to get this done.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The assistant Democratic leader.

NATIONAL MONUMENTS DESIGNATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, resuming my earlier remarks, the Native-American Tribes almost unanimously opposed the action that was announced yesterday by President Trump and Secretary Zinke to shrink the Bears Ears Monument. They have passed resolutions in support of that monument.

Navajo Nation's president said that the President's efforts to shrink the monument "demonstrates their failure to listen to the concerns of our people who have lobbied and fought for over 80 years for this designation." Even worse, the Navajo Nation made several requests to meet with President Trump on the issue, to no avail. Those requests fell on deaf ears, and the administration never met with the leadership of the Navajo Nation or any of the other Tribes who worked to protect this area.

The administration took these actions under the guise of protecting this area for future generations. During President Trump's speech in Utah, he said:

I don't think it is controversial, actually. I think it's so sensible.

From the folks he was speaking to, it must have seemed that his comment was correct, but the group the President was speaking to was a closed-door group of selected supporters of his ad-

ministration who do not reflect the feelings of local residents when it comes to the future of this monument. It reflected the same closed-door process this administration had used to shrink these monuments.

The administration ignored that more than 2.8 million Americans weighed in when there was an open public comment period at the Department of the Interior. Ninety-eight percent of them asked the President to protect the monuments and to maintain their borders—98 percent. So to say that shrinking these monuments dramatically is not controversial is to ignore 2.8 million Americans and the Tribes with whom the President never took the time to meet.

With these reductions, it is clear that Secretary Zinke and President Trump are choosing politics over science and choosing economic and political local concerns over the reality of what this particular monument means to the future of America. They are ignoring Utah's State Historic Preservation Office and the Interior Department's own staff, both confirming that there are artifacts throughout Bears Ears that will now lose their protection because of the decision by President Trump yesterday. The administration's proposed cuts closely follow the desires of Utah politicians to shrink the monument.

I had the opportunity to meet with Secretary Zinke and some of my colleagues a few weeks ago to discuss this reduction in the size of the monuments. In that meeting, he assured me that any potential cuts to Bears Ears would continue to protect the actual site's antiquities, including archeological sites, but according to the internal documents from the Department of the Interior, there are more than 8,400 archeological sites in the monument, 70 percent of which are prehistoric. Even more interesting, according to the Department of the Interior staff, less than 10 percent of the monument has truly been surveyed. That means we have only scratched the surface of the antiquities that could be present there.

What value is it to the people of Utah, what value is it to San Juan County, UT, what value is it to the United States to allow spectators and tourists to roam over these areas without acknowledging their sacred status and historic importance? We only get one chance to preserve our history, and now the President is walking away from that chance for the largest part of the Bears Ears Monument. Taking away protections from these precious places is something that could lead to permanent damage.

During the time that I visited Bears Ears, I stopped near Fry Canyon for a little lunch. I hiked around and saw some amazing artifacts, which I showed in the earlier photograph. These amazing artifacts are outside the new boundaries President Trump decided to draw yesterday. These impressive artifacts are worth preserving, but