

Right now, about 3 out of 10 individual taxpayers itemize. Under our doubling the standard deduction, only 1 out of 10 will find it necessary to itemize.

The simple truth is, the Senate bill will lower tax bills on millions of working-class Americans. It will lower taxes, not raise them, on the working class. Again, by nearly doubling the standard deduction and lowering rates across the board and doubling the child tax credit, the Senate tax reform plan will lower taxes for every income group. The Senate tax plan was written with working families in mind, and the legislation reflects that goal.

As I said earlier, and I will say it again, a family of four earning a median income of about \$70,000 will see a \$2,200 savings in their tax bill each year. It may be easy for folks living in the rarified air in Washington, DC, to shrug that off and say \$2,200 is no big deal to me, but to the people I represent, \$2,200 in tax savings a year is a big deal. It can mean the difference between being able to save for retirement, help pay for a college education, or maybe take a vacation for the first time in a long time. That is the money they have earned, and we are simply saying you can keep more of it under this bill.

Finally, I want to mention the Federal deficit. Will the tax bill increase it? Well, yesterday the Office of Tax Policy at the Treasury Department released an analysis of expected tax revenue associated with the administration's economic growth initiatives. Among the key findings is, \$1.8 trillion of additional revenue would be generated over 10 years based on expected economic growth. The Congressional Budget Office uses the baseline of 1.9-percent economic growth. That is because, during the entire Obama Presidency, the U.S. Government and economy experienced an unprecedented low rate of economic growth since the Great Recession of 2008, but, historically, dating back to World War II, we have seen the economy grow at 3.2 percent. So why should we settle for 1.9 percent or 2 percent? We shouldn't.

Our friends on the other side have suddenly become deficit hawks after seeing the national debt double during the Obama administration. Let's not forget, they supported lowering these same corporate tax rates year after year and embraced other parts of our plan which we have incorporated. That is why their attacks, their histrionics, their screams of Armageddon are laughable, and, frankly, they insult the intelligence of Americans who are trying to figure this out. It is hard to figure out what is actually happening when you have somebody crying like Chicken Little that the sky is falling. It is hard for people to sort all of this out.

Well, as we continue to work on a conference committee report to reconcile the differences between the House and the Senate versions of the

bill, our focus will be on those hard-working American families I mentioned earlier—people of modest income, people of average income.

Yes, we are going to make our businesses more competitive globally because that will benefit the same families we are trying to benefit by the individual tax cuts.

You can see why I perhaps was a little reluctant to come address some of these histrionics and outlandish and unbelievable claims, but I have also learned that if you don't respond—if you don't counter falsehood with truth—some people are simply going to believe the falsehood, so I thought it was important to do so. Let's remain clear-eyed, and let's get this work done.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I come to the floor to talk about the Children's Health Insurance Program and Community Health Centers, but I do want to take a moment to respond to my friend and colleague, the distinguished Senator on the Republican side.

I can speak for myself and others, I know, on this side who very much want to see tax reform, very much want to close loopholes that take jobs overseas and support small businesses, but what is in front of us and what was voted on was a bill that, when fully implemented, would raise taxes on something like 87 million middle-class Americans. That doesn't make any sense at all.

All of the rosy estimates on economic growth were not backed up in legislative language. As to the \$4,000 wage increase that had been talked about as a minimum for people across the country to receive based on economic growth, I suggested we write that into law; that if, in fact, folks don't get their \$4,000, the tax breaks would stop—and folks aren't willing to do that.

I want to make sure folks in Michigan get their \$4,000 wage increase, and we don't get another bunch of promises with trickle-down economics, where everything goes to the top 1 percent, and folks in Michigan are still waiting for it to trickle down.

#### CHIP AND COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS

Mr. President, let me go to the subject I am here to talk about; that is, the fact that we are now on day 73 since the Children's Health Insurance Program and community health center funding has stopped. The Federal funding stopped on September 30.

I am very concerned. I was reading today that the House leadership has essentially been saying they don't want to see this continued as part of a year-end package in 2 weeks. My assumption was, we were going to see the Children's Health Insurance Program and community health centers wrapped into the bill in a couple of weeks that would set the priorities for our country.

If it is true what was reported, there ought to be an alarm going out all across the country. The Children's Health Insurance Program—which we call MICHild in Michigan—covers 9 million children across the country. These are working families. These are working families who need some help to have insurance for their children—children who now go to the doctor instead of an emergency room. This actually saves dollars by children being able to have a regular relationship with a doctor, parents knowing they can take their children to the doctor instead of having to figure out how to address their concerns in the middle of the night in the emergency room.

So 9 million children right now are at risk because of inaction. It has been 73 days. I am very concerned that as soon as February, the MICHild Program will be running out of funding. In fact, this month, there are three States that are losing funding for the Children's Health Insurance Program: Arizona, with over 88,000 children who receive health insurance and are able to go to the doctor. Their moms and dads know that at least the kids are going to be able to see the doctor for their juvenile diabetes, their asthma, or simple things like a cold, flu, or serious things like cancer.

New Hampshire has 17,000—almost 18,000 children. In Oregon, 140,000 children right now receive their healthcare through the Children's Health Insurance Program. Starting in January, if there is no action, we will see millions of children losing their health insurance: California, Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Idaho, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Texas, Utah, and Virginia. Each month, we will see funding that will be eliminated. In total, we are talking about 9 million children.

This has been a bipartisan program. This came out of committee on a bipartisan vote in September with Senator HATCH and Senator WYDEN. I was pleased to join them in putting together a 5-year extension. It came out of committee with strong bipartisan support and only one “no” vote.

I assumed it was going to be brought up on the floor before September 30 and passed. Yet 73 days later, children and families across the country are still waiting.

The other piece of healthcare that has been so critical to families—to children and individuals across our country—is funding for community health centers, which, by the way, also has strong bipartisan support. Senator ROY BLUNT and I have put in legislation with Republicans and Democrats cosponsoring it. We have a letter that 70 different Members signed to our leadership saying they support extending community health center funding. Yet, again, there has been no action for 73 days.

Our assumption had been that the Children's Health Insurance Program would come to the floor, we would amend it to add health centers, and get

it done before September 30. It has not happened. The community health centers serve 25 million patients in every part of our country. So 300,000 veterans rely on community health centers, and 7.5 million children, as well, rely on community health centers. I should add, we have 260 sites all across Michigan serving 681,000 people. Again, almost 13,000 Michigan veterans use our community health centers.

We have bipartisan support to continue funding, but the funding ended September 30. So what happens? Well, starting in January, Michigan's community health centers will lose \$12.8 million in funding because about 70 percent of the funding for health centers comes through the legislation we are now offering with bipartisan support. About 20,000 people will lose their healthcare. By June, Michigan's health centers will lose over \$80 million in funding, and almost 100,000 patients will lose healthcare. This is critically important as well. We are talking about 25 million people across the country.

Community health centers and the Children's Health Insurance Program is something we have come together on, on a bipartisan basis, over the years. There has to be a sense of urgency about this. We cannot leave at Christmas—we can't leave for the holidays without having a guarantee that children and families and individuals across our country will be able to have the health insurance and the medical care they have been receiving.

The best Christmas present—the best New Year's present we could give families—is to guarantee that moms and dads can take their kids to the doctor, if we have the Children's Health Insurance Program, and that people young and old across the country who use community health centers will still know they can count on them.

Let me close by just sharing a story from John, who is one of the more than 12,700 veterans served by Michigan's community health centers.

John had always been healthy. He didn't have health insurance. In fact, the last time he had seen a doctor was when he was still in the service back in 1975.

Last summer, he started having symptoms. He tried to ignore them, but his wife knew something was wrong. They tried to get help but faced long waits for him to be seen. That is when they contacted the Traverse Health Clinic.

The clinic was able to get John in right away, and his wife's fears were confirmed. He was diagnosed with congestive heart failure.

The team at Traverse Health Clinic helped get John admitted to the hospital, coordinated services with the cardiologist, and got him signed up for health coverage. That is what community health centers do—connect people with the services they need to be treated or provide preventive care so that they can stay healthy.

In John's case, he says it changed his life. John said this:

There are a lot of people like me who were doing fine and now they're not. There are a lot of people like me who need a place like Traverse Health Clinic. I consider myself extremely fortunate. Now I have a doctor. I'm so thankful.

On behalf of the 25 million people who use community health centers and the 9 million children covered by the Children's Health Insurance Program, it is time that we act. They have been waiting for 73 days. We could do this in a few hours, in a day, on the Senate floor. I urge us to get this done.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mr. SASSE. Mr. President, I rise today in continued support of Steve Grasz's nomination to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit.

Some of those who have been attacking Mr. Grasz have claimed that he doesn't have the character or the temperament to treat litigants fairly and decide cases based on the facts and the law.

In evaluating those claims, I hope my colleagues in this body will listen to the hundreds of Nebraskans of all partisan and ideological stripes who have stood up in support of Steve's nomination. I urge everyone to listen to what those Nebraskans have to say specifically about his character and about his temperament.

One Nebraskan wrote to Mrs. FISCHER, the senior Senator from Nebraska, and to me, as well as to the Judiciary Committee:

I was the plaintiff in a First Amendment defamation and political speech action against the Nebraska Republican Party. . . . Mr. Grasz represented the Nebraska Republican Party. I was not successful in my lawsuit. However, I did have the opportunity to meet and interact with Mr. Grasz during the case and found him to be . . . a consummate professional. Based on my observations I believe his judicial temperament would be of the highest quality and all parties would be given equal opportunity. . . . I can think of no one better qualified or suited to be appointed to this prestigious judgeship than Steven Grasz.

Another Nebraskan wrote to us:

I know Steve personally having served as opposing counsel to him on cases. . . . Steve was a formidable opponent. . . . While he zealously advocated for his clients, he did so in a level-headed and even-keeled manner.

Yet another Nebraskan writes:

I . . . have . . . represented clients in cases where Mr. Grasz was opposing counsel. In all circumstances he demonstrates the utmost professionalism. . . . I am a registered Democrat and, quite frankly, am not a strong supporter of the current administration. However, as a practicing attorney dealing with complex litigation and appearing regularly in the federal courts of appeals, I want intelligent, thoughtful individuals appointed to the Bench who will administer the law and apply existing precedent. I have no doubt that Mr. Grasz can do that very effectively.

Also, consider the words of this Nebraskan:

Steve does not allow his role as an advocate to cloud his analyses and judgment. He

reviews statutes, regulations, rule and common law with a clear eye, and he applies these authorities to the facts presented to him. . . . [H]is respect for precedent and his high regard for the works of other branches of government show his dedication to following the Constitution and our nation's laws as they are written.

Steve Grasz is a Nebraskan through and through. As I said here on the floor yesterday, Steve bleeds Husker red, but he is a guy who is well suited to take on the black robes of the judge, for he understands that we do not have blue or red partisan jerseys on our article III branch of government, the independent judiciary.

Steve is well suited to serve as a judge on the Eighth Circuit. I think that not just Nebraskans but folks across all the States represented in the Eighth Circuit are going to find a man of unbelievable temperament.

The ABA is a liberal advocacy organization. That is absolutely their right. What is not OK is for the ABA to masquerade as a neutral arbiter of professional qualifications.

Attacks on Steve's character have come out of this process because the two reviewers from the ABA cite again and again and again anonymous sources of his supposed rudeness. We have seen none of that in Nebraska. Again, hundreds of people have written to the senior Senator and to me and now to the Judiciary Committee in support of the President's decision to nominate Steve Grasz to the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the specific letters I have just cited.

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

MOATS LAW FIRM, P.C., L.L.O.,

Elkhorn, NE, September 21, 2017.

Re Nomination of Steven Grasz for 8th Circuit Appellate Judgeship.

Chairman CHUCK GRASSLEY,  
Senate Judiciary Committee,  
Washington, DC.

Ranking Member DIANNE FEINSTEIN,  
Senate Judiciary Committee,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATORS GRASSLEY AND FEINSTEIN: Steven Grasz has been nominated as an appellate judge for the United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit. I write this letter of recommendation in support of his nomination and confirmation. I am a lifelong member of the Democratic party.

I have known Mr. Grasz since 2009 when we were involved in common litigation to the Nebraska Supreme Court (*Moats v. Republican Party of Nebraska*, 281 Neb. 411, 796 N.W.2d 584 (2011)) which was subsequently appealed to the United States Supreme Court where certiorari was denied. I was the plaintiff in a First Amendment defamation and political speech action against the Nebraska Republican Party arising out of a non-partisan office I sought in the Nebraska Unicameral in the fall of 2008. Mr. Grasz represented the Nebraska Republican Party.

I was not successful in my lawsuit. However I did have the opportunity to meet and interact with Mr. Grasz during the case and found him to be polite and courteous and extremely well informed and educated on this complicated subject matter. At no time did

he ever show any inappropriate actions or behavior towards me or my family and was a consummate professional. Based on my observations I believe his judicial temperament would be of the highest quality and all parties would be given equal opportunity.

In life there is always another chapter to each of our collective stories. I am pleased to inform you, that my dealings with Mr. Grasz and his family extended beyond the case we were involved in. Our children were involved in competitive dance for the past four years and my wife and our children had the opportunity to interact with Mr. Grasz and his family in a social setting. My observations and interactions with him were always positive and productive notwithstanding him having been on opposite side of a very emotional case. He is a terrific husband and father, a brilliant legal scholar and oaring human being. I can think of no one better qualified or suited to be appointed to this prestigious judgeship than Steven Grasz.

Sincerely,

REX J. MOATS.

SEPTEMBER 18, 2017.

Re Nomination of L. Steven Grasz.

Chairman CHUCK GRASSLEY,  
*Senate Judiciary Committee, Washington, DC.*  
Ranking Member DIANNE FEINSTEIN,  
*Senate Judiciary Committee, Washington, DC.*

CHAIRMAN GRASSLEY AND RANKING MEMBER FEINSTEIN: I write in support of the nomination of Steve Grasz to the United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit. I know Steve personally having served as opposing counsel to him on cases. I also know him by reputation in the Omaha legal community through his work on significant litigation.

Steve was a formidable opponent. He was willing to go the extra step to advance his clients' interests. While he zealously advocated for his clients, he did so in a level-headed and even-keeled manner. I've never seen him raise his voice. He listens and asks good questions. His temperament is well suited for the position to which he has been nominated.

There is no question Steve has the intellect to do the important work of a federal appellate court judge. He has published multiple law review articles which have contributed to the practice of law. Steve's pleadings and briefs are clear, thoughtful, and well written. He did not attempt to advance frivolous claims. In my experience with him, he works diligently and was always well prepared.

Unfortunately, with some lawyers, every conversation has to be memorialized in a letter out of fear that the lawyer will reverse course. That was not the case with Steve. His word was good.

Steve has both represented the government and represented individuals in claims against the government. He has valuable litigation experience in cases involving Section 1983 claims and qualified immunity which make up a significant portion of the cases handled by federal appellate judges. His experience will serve him well while sitting on the other side of the bench.

I believe Steve is committed to upholding the laws and Constitution of the United States, and will do so as a member of the Eighth Circuit. I urge the Judiciary Committee to advance his nomination.

Respectfully Submitted,

TIMOTHY J. THALKEN.

SEPTEMBER 9, 2017.

Re Confirmation Hearing for L. Steven Grasz for Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit.

Chairman CHUCK GRASSLEY,  
*Senate Judiciary Committee, Washington, DC.*  
Ranking Member DIANNE FEINSTEIN,  
*Senate Judiciary Committee, Washington, DC.*

DEAR SENATOR GRASSLEY AND SENATOR FEINSTEIN: I am writing to express my support for Steven (Steve) Grasz to be confirmed as judge for the United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit. I have been a lawyer for twenty-one years, and had the good fortune to spend five of those years working with Steve on a variety of matters spanning from local litigation to federal regulatory and administrative actions. While Steve ably represented clients in state and federal venues, I observed firsthand the qualities that would make him an outstanding federal appellate court judge.

Steve possesses admirable analytical skills an ability to grasp complex and often highly abstract concepts in a manner that allows to communicate these concepts in a plain, understandable way. From a practical perspective, this is very important skill for any judge to possess because it is the vanishingly rare lawsuit in which the underlying dispute is so very narrow that the judge's ruling is limited only to the parties before the Court. Instead, judges' resolutions of disputes serve as guidelines for many other lawyers and their respective clients to follow in future transactions. This is especially true for Circuit-level opinions, which are widely disseminated. Well-reasoned, cogent judicial opinions are an invaluable resource for lawyers to turn to when advising Clients who may or may not be overly familiar with our justice system. Lawyers rely upon judicial opinions when advising clients about the relative risks and benefits of a particular course of action. Steve's ability to communicate difficult, often abstract concepts in plain terms will contribute greatly to this very important function of our legal system.

Importantly, Steve does not allow his role as advocate to cloud his analyses and judgment. He reviews statutes, regulations rule and common law with a clear eye, and applies these authorities to the facts presented to him. Steve advises clients and develops strategies based upon existing authorities, showing his respect for our system of governance and for each branch's contribution to it. His ability and willingness to evaluate particular facts in light of various authorities is a critical skill for judges to possess, and shows his deep respect, for precedential law. Similarly, his respect for precedent and his regard for the works of other branches of government show his dedication to following the Constitution and our nation's laws as they are written. This quality is critically important for a judge to have following the Constitution and our nation's laws as they are written is part and parcel of the development and application of clear, lasting legal principles upon which all members of the public—not only lawyers and their clients—may rely in conducting the transactions of everyday life.

Finally, Steve has a temperament very well-suited in the bench. He is levelheaded and unfailingly courteous to opposing lawyers their respective clients, and to judges. I have seen Steve involved in challenging, stressful situations, yet his demeanor consistently remains composed and polite. He does not engage in personal criticism of judges, fellow lawyers, or litigants, nor does he allow the behavior of others to be anything other than courteous and professional. While certainly not every lawyer possesses this ability, it is a vital one for judges to

have because our system of justice depends upon judges' ability to maintain decorum even when attorneys or litigants are not doing so. Through trying situations, Steve has consistently shown his ability and willingness to treat all attorneys and parties with respect, and he has conducted himself in the professional, composed manner that lawyers hope to see in judges at every level. His treatment of others ultimately honors the truth-seeking function our system of justice is intended to fulfill since he does not engage in obstructionist tactics or gamesmanship intended to drive up litigation costs or designed to deny other parties access to information bearing upon matter in dispute. As a lawyer, Steve sets an excellent example of someone working toward fair and just resolutions of disputes. This attribute would serve him very well as a judge and would directly benefit all persons impacted by the court's decisions.

Thank you for taking the time to review my letter of support for Steve. If you have any questions or concerns about my standpoint regarding his ample qualifications for being confirmed as judge for the United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit, please let me know.

Sincerely,

TIM DOLAN.

OMAHA, NE,

September 20, 2017.

Re Nomination of Steve Grasz, United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit.

Hon. CHUCK GRASSLEY,  
*U.S. Senator,*  
*Senate Judiciary Committee, Washington, DC.*

DEAR SENATOR GRASSLEY: I am writing to indicate my strong support for President Trump's nomination of Steve Grasz to the United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit.

Mr. Grasz was employed by the Kutak Rock law firm when I began working there right after law school. Mr. Grasz is very intelligent and has the legal background and skill to be an asset to the Court of Appeals. I have maintained my acquaintance with Mr. Grasz and have also represented clients in cases where Mr. Grasz was opposing counsel. In all circumstances he demonstrates the utmost professionalism.

I have no hesitation in stating that litigants could present to him the most complex legal issues and he would be able to analyze them intelligently and coherently. I have also had the opportunity to read materials he has written. Opinions by him would be a credit to the judiciary.

Although I personally believe that an individual's personal political, social, or religious practices and beliefs are irrelevant to qualifications for a judicial position, I realize that such considerations have been injected into judicial confirmation proceedings over the past few years. I expect that certain factions may attempt to raise such issues regarding Mr. Grasz who has actively served both his government and his community.

I am a registered Democrat and, quite frankly, am not a strong supporter of the current administration. However, as a practicing attorney dealing with complex litigation and appearing regularly in the federal courts of appeals, I want intelligent, thoughtful individuals appointed to the Bench who will administer the law and apply existing precedent. I have no doubt Mr. Grasz can do that very effectively.

I appreciate your consideration of my recommendation. If there is any interest in further information, please feel free to have your staff contact me.

Sincerely,

DIANA J. VOGT,  
*For the Firm.*

Mr. SASSE. I urge all of my colleagues to listen to all of the Nebraskans, again, of all backgrounds and across the partisan spectrum, as they have urged us to confirm Mr. Grasz today.

Thank you.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill 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 (Mr. CRUZ). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII that at 4 p.m. on Tuesday, December 12, there be 30 minutes of postcloture time remaining on the Grasz nomination, equally divided between the leaders or their designees, and that following the use or yielding back of that time, the Senate vote on the confirmation of the Grasz nomination and that, if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR 5-YEAR  
OFFSHORE OIL AND GAS PLAN

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, there are all kinds of reports swirling around Washington, and we are hearing from those reports that the Trump administration is about to give a huge, early Christmas present to the oil industry. The reports are, the Department of the Interior is preparing to unveil a new 5-year plan for offshore oil and gas drilling—one that would open up the entire Atlantic coast of the United States to drilling. This new 5-year plan, which would go into effect in 2019, would replace the current 5-year plan that was finalized just last year and doesn't expire until 2022.

Why is the Department of the Interior in such a rush to waste taxpayers' money to write a new one? The answer is, the oil industry wants to start drilling in these areas now, and the Trump administration is going to let them do it. While it hasn't been released yet, we are hearing that the administration's new plan will open up the entire Atlantic coast to offshore drilling—from Maine to as far south as Cape Canaveral. Let me show you why that is a problem.

This is the east coast of the United States. This is Maine. This is Florida. This is Cape Canaveral. This is Fort Pierce, FL. Look what happens on the Atlantic coast off the eastern continental United States. These are all military testing areas. Every one of these hatched areas—every one of these blocks—is of a place that has limited access because of military testing.

Take, for example, all of this area off the east coast of Florida. There is a place called the Cape Canaveral Air Force Station. There is a place called the Kennedy Space Center. We are launching commercial and military rockets, and within another year and a half, we will be launching American rockets with American astronauts that will go, just like the space shuttle before them, to and from the International Space Station and will carry crews as well as the cargo they already carry.

When you are launching to the International Space Station or, in 2 years, when we launch the largest rocket ever from the Kennedy Space Center—the forerunner to the Mars Program, taking humans to Mars, or in the case of the new Mars rocket, called the SLS, the Space Launch System—where do you think it will drop its solid rocket boosters? It will drop them precisely out here, which is exactly why you cannot have oil rigs out here.

All of the commercial rockets that come out of Cape Canaveral right now put up a host of communications satellites; that is, a constellation of satellites. How do you think we get our pinpoint GPS here on Earth? Many of those rockets are coming right out of the Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, and, increasingly, there is commercial activity at the Kennedy Space Center, which is collocated with the Cape Canaveral Air Force Station.

What about all of those scientific satellites that are out there that give us precise measurements on what is happening to the climate so when we then track hurricanes, we know precisely and have such great success in predicting the path and the voracity of a hurricane? All of those rockets are coming out of Cape Canaveral. They have first stages, and when the first stages burn up, they have to fall somewhere. You cannot have oil and gas production out here.

It would be the same off of Norfolk, VA. They also have a launching point there for NASA—Wallops Island. Yet, in the Norfolk area, all of the military does its training out in the Atlantic, and you are going to have a whole disruption.

Take, for example, all of the military assets—spy satellites—that go into orbit and are rocketed out of Cape Canaveral. Those first stages, when burned up, have to fall. That is why we have a location like the Cape Canaveral Air Force Station. It launches from west to east in order to get that extra boost of the Earth's rotation and, therefore, needs less fuel to get into orbit.

This is a prime location. You cannot put oil and gas out here. You cannot have oil rigs off of Cape Canaveral, where all of these military, NASA, and commercial rockets are going, as well as governmental payloads that are not military.

We have heard the loud opposition from the Department of Defense, the chambers of commerce, fishermen, and coastal communities all along the Atlantic that have weighed in against the administration's plan to allow drilling off their coasts.

We thought we had put this puppy to bed last year when the Obama administration backed off its plans to have these drilling areas. They backed off because of the opposition. They also backed off when it came to Florida. Why? Florida has more beaches than any other State. We don't have as much coastline. Alaska has the greatest coastline, but the last time I checked, Alaska didn't have a lot of beaches. The one that is blessed with the beautiful beaches is Florida. When it comes to beaches, that means people want to go to the beach, and that means there is a significant tourism-driven economy there. We learned what happened with just the threat of there being oil on the beach. Remember the Deepwater Horizon oil explosion off of Louisiana? Let me show you so you don't get confused with all of these colors.

In essence, all of this yellow over on the other side of Florida, in the Gulf of Mexico, means this area is off-limits. It is in law, and it is a good thing because when the Deepwater Horizon spilled off of Louisiana, the winds shifted, and that oil started drifting to the east. It got as far as Pensacola Beach, and it completely blackened the white, sugary sands. That photograph went all over the world. Pensacola Beach was covered up in oil, and the winds kept carrying it forward. Some of it got into Choctawhatchee Bay and the sands of Destin, and some of the tar balls went as far east as the Panama City Beach. Then the winds shifted and carried it back, and that was the extent of the oil on the beach.

For 1 solid year—a tourist year—the tourists did not come to the west coast of Florida because they had seen the pictures of what had happened to Pensacola Beach, all of the way down the west coast—the Tampa Bay area, Sarasota, the Fort Myers area, Naples, Marco Island. The tourists did not come.

Now let's go back to the Atlantic. When you start to do this, you are now threatening the lifeblood of Florida's economy, its tourism-driven economy. It is not only a threat to the environment, but it is a threat to the multibillion-dollar, tourism-driven economy.

In 2010, we lost an entire season, as the tourists did not come to the west coast of Florida. That is why, when I gave the list of all of those entities, including the U.S. Department of Defense, they don't want it. It is because