

Another colleague, who tried to criticize Director Pompeo's diversity policies at the CIA, was met with this response from Director Pompeo, who explained at the hearing that those types of complaints decreased under his leadership. Mike Pompeo stated: "The number of—we call them 'no fear complaints'—the statutory requirement decreased from 2016 to 2017 by 40 percent."

Director Pompeo further explained: "I'm proud of the record . . . the work that my team has done on this."

So concerns about diversity policies was refuted at the committee hearing.

Another Senator seems worried that Mike Pompeo is conducting diplomacy and said: "Pompeo is the wrong person to be engaging in diplomacy."

The nominee to be Secretary of State is the wrong person to be conducting diplomacy? Perhaps we need somebody working at the Department of Transportation. Maybe that is the person they want to conduct diplomacy. Building interstates—maybe that is who they think should be conducting diplomacy. I would rather have somebody who has been nominated to be Secretary of State to be conducting diplomacy—somebody who has an outstanding background in the military, somebody who stood in Europe during the height of the Cold War, standing on the iron wall.

This is a time when we ought to be doing everything we can to confirm a Secretary of State—somebody who has had meetings already with Kim Jong Un, who has an understanding of what has to happen to achieve what Kim Jong Un has said—denuclearization—to achieve what is the goal of this country, the stated goal that is already enshrined in law: complete and verifiable irreversible denuclearization.

To simply oppose his nomination for partisan purposes is wrong. We have seen it time and again. What we have is a simple partisan effort to derail the top diplomat, who is already engaged in top-level negotiations about denuclearization with the most significant threat this country has seen since the Cuban Missile Crisis. This country deserves better. Certainly this institution can do better.

We have somebody in Mike Pompeo with a solid background, an understanding of diplomacy and, clearly, the intelligence background through his time at the CIA, and now he would be denied this opportunity simply because of his political affiliation.

This country deserves better.

I urge my colleagues to stop this absurd obstruction and confirm Mike Pompeo, and let's get to work achieving what could be lasting peace on the Korean Peninsula. That time is now, and I urge my colleagues to take the opportunity for peace.

I yield the floor.

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

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

#### UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—COAST GUARD AUTHORIZATION LEGISLATION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, the Senate routinely reauthorizes the Coast Guard, much like the Defense act. It shouldn't be a terribly partisan issue. It never has been. We all deeply respect the work of the Coast Guard and recognize the heroism of the men and women who serve in that capacity.

But, unfortunately, the Republican majority slipped a poison pill rider into this otherwise noncontroversial bill that would repeal part of the Clean Water Act. That is why the Coast Guard reauthorization bill failed today.

The rider would prohibit the EPA and the States from regulating pollution and invasive species from the ballast water of large vessels. Instead, it would let the Coast Guard set regulations—an agency that doesn't have the environmental expertise of the EPA. This is a massive change to the Clean Water Act.

The Clean Water Act has worked well for decades because the States drive innovation and enforcement in partnership with the EPA. Under this law, States would no longer be able to do that. The idea of States' rights goes out the window.

I have visited many different parts of my State, in Upstate New York, where invasive species have long plagued communities, or parts of Long Island, where toxic chemicals and algae plague the bays and beaches. They hurt our clamming industry severely. They hurt businesses, they hurt tourism, and they hurt fishing as well—you name it.

We believe the rider will cost many States tens of billions of dollars in lost economic activity. Let me repeat that. Many States will lose tens of billions of dollars in economic activity because of this rider.

Let me also say this about small recreational fishermen—and New York State is third in the number of recreational pleasure boats. No one is proposing to hurt the little guy. That is why Democrats are ready to permanently exempt them from vessel discharge requirements.

Finally, let me make a point about progress and regular order. The vessel discharge provisions in this bill violate the regular order of the Senate. This is a matter under the jurisdiction of the Environment and Public Works Committee, not the Commerce Committee. There was no consultation with the EPW minority on this provision. There were no hearings. Instead, the Commerce Committee inserted these provisions into the Coast Guard reauthorization bill over the objection of many Democrats.

So I will be offering shortly to pass a clean Coast Guard reauthorization bill by unanimous consent. It includes a permanent exemption from discharge

requirements for small recreational fishermen. Democrats are ready to pass this Coast Guard bill as is, without the poison pill environmental rider.

Mr. President, as in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment at the desk to the McConnell motion to concur with amendment No. 2232 be called up and made in order; that the amendment be agreed to; that the motion to concur with amendment No. 2232, as amended, be agreed to; and that the motion to refer and all other amendments be withdrawn.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, there is no objection to the Senate considering an amendment to strike the VIDA language. We have offered our colleagues the opportunity to vote on this amendment all week, and if the Senate needs to speak on the question of whether to include the VIDA language in the Coast Guard bill, I would welcome that debate and a fair up-or-down vote. There are many supporters of this language from both sides of the aisle, and I am confident the amendment would be defeated.

I would ask the Senator to revise his request: That the Senate resume consideration of the Coast Guard legislation; that the amendment to strike the VIDA provision be made pending and the Senate vote on the amendment prior to a vote on the motion to concur with further amendment.

So would the Senator be willing to modify?

Mr. SCHUMER. I will not.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection to the original request?

Mr. MCCONNELL. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The majority leader.

#### COAST GUARD AUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, today Senate Democrats have filibustered legislation to reauthorize funding for our Coast Guard.

In a dangerous world, the brave men and women of the Coast Guard are always ready for the call, whether it be to interdict drugs, to secure our ports, or to conduct daring maritime rescues. They deserve our support. They don't deserve a filibuster for the sake of political posturing. So let's have a little plain talk about why the bill failed.

Democrats filibustered this legislation because it contains an eminently sensible, bipartisan provision to streamline regulations for the mariners and vessel operators who drive America's maritime economy. It would cut back on duplicative rules and overlapping enforcement and provide a uniform standard that protects the environment and commerce alike.

If this sounds like a commonsense, bipartisan measure, that is because that is exactly what it is. This legislation has been favorably reported by the Commerce Committee six times—six

times—during the last three Congresses, including when our Democratic friends controlled the committee.

You might think that would be enough around here to get a bill passed. But earlier today, a number of the very same Democrats who cosponsored this very legislation, in this very Congress, flip-flopped under partisan pressure and voted against it. In fact, if all of the Senate Democrats who are currently cosponsors of this provision had voted for the bill, the cloture motion would have passed. Let me say that again. If the cosponsors of this measure in this Congress had voted for the bill, the cloture motion would have passed. If only those Democrats who had put their name on this provision would have actually followed through and voted for it, the filibuster would be over.

Look, our constituents sent us here to stand for their interests. In landlocked States like Kentucky and Missouri, thousands and thousands of jobs depend on our inland waterways. In coastal States like Delaware, Washington, and Florida, major ports enable hundreds of billions of dollars of U.S. commerce. Of course, the people of Hawaii rely on shipping for everything from groceries to gasoline.

In all of these States, and elsewhere, I know workers and job creators were excited about the prospect of reform in this area. How do I know that? Because, in several cases, they successfully persuaded their own Democratic Senators to support it—or so it had seemed, until today.

You know, Americans might be forgiven for thinking that persuading their Senator to go out of their way and cosponsor a bill would be the same thing as persuading them to actually vote for it. Apparently, where several of my Democratic colleagues are concerned, that is simply not the case because when party leaders came calling and asked my colleagues to put party-line obstruction politics ahead of their constituents' best interests, they folded. This is what people don't like about this town.

Well, my Democratic friends' political priorities may have shifted—away from the people they are elected to fight for and toward leftwing pressure groups. But the merits of the issue have not changed, so the Senate will consider this issue further and will vote on this legislation again.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I come to speak tonight because I did not support the Coast Guard bill as it came out of committee. We wanted to see changes to it, and the legislation that was brought up and the final language on Monday night gave our colleagues very little time to consider it.

Washington State is very proud of the rich maritime heritage the Coast Guard provides, and our fishermen, Tribes, shipbuilders, sea trade, and

thriving coastal tourism all count on us to work together for our maritime economy.

Thousands of Pacific Northwest fishermen call Washington State home, with over 35,000 Washington State jobs supported by Alaska fisheries. The ports of Tacoma and Seattle are combined to be the fourth largest container gateway in the United States.

The Coast Guard plays a pivotal role in national security, in fishing, in over-seeing and, in many ways, keeping our waterways safe. That is why we would love to see a Coast Guard bill which moves forward without the controversial pieces of language that are included.

I know many of my colleagues have thought this is a way to get our colleagues from the Midwest, and other places, to just swallow wholesale huge changes that could cost our economy billions of dollars—such as the zebra mussel, which alone would cost \$6.4 billion a year, and an ecosystem full of rampant and sometimes toxic algae growth, which would and destroy recreation. This is from a letter regarding the Coast Guard Authorization Act.

I would like to see us move forward tonight on the things we can agree on—Why? Because I know these things are important as well—and continue to work on a resolution for some of the thornier issues that still remain.

I would like to see us move forward. I would like to see a recapitalization of the Coast Guard icebreaker and Polar Star. The Polar Star is homeported in Seattle and is operational only for our heavy icebreaker capabilities.

This bill also includes language to improve the Coast Guard oversight of ships that pose an oilspill risk, which is a constant threat to us in Puget Sound and throughout the West, given the large amount of oil traffic that comes through Puget Sound out our strait.

The bill also includes language to strengthen paid family leave policies at the Coast Guard. We just had the commandant nominee before the Commerce Committee. One of the reasons I questioned him on the paid family leave strategies and moving forward is that I want to give him every tool to continue to keep the workforce of women that they have in the Coast Guard. His commitment to me is that they would love to see this strengthened paid family leave policy in the underlying Coast Guard bill. Why not give that to them tonight? Our Coast Guard families should not be forced to choose between serving their country and supporting their families, and this bill would be a good step forward.

Lastly, this bill includes bipartisan language that would help us protect shipyard jobs by making sure we fix the problem related to Dakota Creek and also making sure our permanent fishing vessel exemptions would be allowed in this legislation.

I know we face challenges on continued definitions of best technology. But

that is better than having a definition that exists in the underlying bill, which I think we should separate the good policy from, that would really make no indication or an economic analysis that would leave us with the Great Lakes, and many areas, without the kind of clean water that will allow us to continue to do good science and good fishery policy in that area of the United States.

I hope we can move forward on the policies that my colleagues know we can get agreement on. I just heard the debate between the majority leader and Senator SCHUMER, so I understand there is an objection to moving the Coast Guard bill.

#### UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST

I have a bill at the desk to improve the regulation of certain vessels, and I ask unanimous consent, as in legislative session, that the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration, that the bill be considered read a third time and passed, and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, let me just make one correction for the record that my friend, the Democratic leader, brought up earlier and which has been alluded to by the Senator from Washington.

The issue was a matter under the jurisdiction of the Commerce Committee, and for the information of the Senate, this part of the bill has been introduced as a stand-alone bill. Senate bill 168 was referred to the Commerce Committee and not the EPW Committee, and the chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee agrees with that. So this argument that somehow this is not under the committee's jurisdiction is one I would raise as an objection to the request of Senator from Washington.

Secondly, as I think the Senator from Washington knows, we have worked tirelessly with every member of our committee on both sides of the aisle and Members off the committee. Furthermore, I think we have accommodated every request the Senator from Washington has made on this bill, and we have involved her in all these discussions. My understanding was that as a result of that consultation and those discussions on the bill, she was going to vote in favor of the bill.

Now what she wants to do is take out those pieces of a very carefully negotiated bill that she doesn't like and pass just the provisions that she likes. It would be great if, here in the U.S. Senate, we could all do that. But that doesn't happen around here.

We carefully negotiated this, with great input from the Senator from Washington, and it was my understanding that the Senator from Washington was going to vote for this package. I object to picking out the pieces