

That means they are too big to fail. That is why the American taxpayers had to bail them out in 2009.

The American taxpayers, many of whom Citigroup and Bank of America now condescend to across our great land, gave Citigroup \$476 billion of their hard-earned money—not \$476 million to bail out Citigroup, \$476 billion. And the American taxpayers, many of whom choose to exercise their rights under the Second Amendment and whom these banks are trying to now punish, gave Bank of America \$336 billion in 2008 and 2009 to keep them from going broke.

These banks are supposed to act as a source of credit for households and businesses and local and State governments and as a source of liquidity for the entire banking system, but that also means their corporate policies will have ripple effects through every corner of our economy, from consumers and businesses of all sizes to banks and nonbank holding companies.

If the banking system worked like a grocery store, I would still disagree with these new anti-gun rules by Citigroup and Bank of America, but I would respect their rights to enact whatever corporate policies align with their beliefs. But banks are not grocery stores. A grocery store doesn't need a government charter to operate. A grocery store doesn't have a government corporation backed by the taxpayers of this country to insure their deposits. A grocery store doesn't have a government bank that pays them interest. Banks do.

One grocery store doesn't get so big that it lends and borrows and buys and sells from nearly every other grocery store in the country. Citigroup does, and so does Bank of America.

A grocery store doesn't need an \$812.3 billion bailout from the American taxpayers, many of whom choose to exercise their rights under the U.S. Constitution, including, but not limited to, the Second Amendment.

Citigroup and Bank of America have decided to make banking a red-versus-blue issue by trampling on the Second Amendment rights of small business owners and therefore all Americans.

If additional big consumer banks come out with similar anti-Second Amendment policies, it will get harder and harder for businesses in my State of Louisiana and small businesses in other States and elsewhere to find banking services. We will have red banks, and we will have blue banks. I don't think that is what we want in America.

I want to make sure that the Federal Government isn't rewarding this behavior with even more taxpayer dollars. I think \$1 trillion to bail out these two banks by the American taxpayers is quite enough.

I have already petitioned the General Services Administration to cancel the Federal Government's \$700 billion contract with Citigroup, and I have urged officials in the State of Louisiana to

reevaluate all State contracts with any Wall Street bank that chooses to implement an extra-legal policy that infringes on the Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

Citigroup and Bank of America owe their continued existence to the generosity of the American taxpayer. If it weren't for the American taxpayer, there would be no Citigroup; there would be no Bank of America. I find it very disturbing that these Wall Street banks may be profiting from taxpayer-funded contracts at the same time they are pushing a political agenda—and that is what it is, a political agenda—and severing ties with law-abiding businesses in the process. Given the size of these banks, it is likely that the same is true in States across America.

I find it offensive—I find it offensive—that Wall Street banks are taking taxpayer dollars with one hand and condescending to them with their “we know better than you do” attitude by using the other hand to come after the guns those taxpayers lawfully own under the Second Amendment. Rather than impose its political agenda on law-abiding citizens, these Wall Street banks ought to remember how taxpayers spent billions of dollars—almost \$1 trillion—to bail them out after the 2008 financial crisis. They owe a tremendous debt to the American people, and it seems they have a very short memory.

We don't need red banks in America. We don't need blue banks in America. We need safe banks in America.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

TRIBUTE TO DENNIS WILLIAMS

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to someone who has been fighting for working men and women his entire career.

Just for a moment, let's think back to 1977. The top movie that year was “Star Wars”—the original one—and the average movie ticket cost \$2.23. The Apple II computer went on sale. It cost \$1,298, not including the television you needed to use for a monitor. The space shuttle *Enterprise* took its first test flight, perched on top of a Boeing 747. And a young Marine Corps veteran and salvage welder at J.I. Case first joined UAW Local 806 in Rock Island, IL. He began fighting at that point for workers' rights.

A few things have changed since then. “Star Wars” and Apple have evolved, and the space shuttle has retired. Yet one thing hasn't changed: Dennis Williams is just as dedicated to the working men and women of the UAW today as he was four decades ago. Over the years, he has served them in a number of ways, including negotiating

the first contract at Mitsubishi Motors North America in Bloomington, IL; organizing Indiana State employees; helping Local 844 in Vermont, IL, obtain their first contract; and serving locals throughout the nine States of Region 4.

In 2010, he was elected UAW's secretary-treasurer. In 2014, he was elected United Auto Workers' president, a position he has held with distinction since then. It hasn't been an easy time to lead the UAW. The great recession hit the American automobile industry very hard. Some folks thought we should just let the auto industry go bankrupt. Instead, the United Auto Workers made sacrifices, stood strong, stood together, and weathered the storm. Under Dennis Williams' leadership, the UAW ended 2017 with a fiscal surplus for the third straight year and with more than 430,000 members—up 60,000 members since 2011. It is no surprise. Anyone who has worked with Dennis knows just how dedicated he is to his members and to the communities where they live and where they work.

Just ask the people of Flint. During the water crisis—which, by the way, continues on—UAW members from all over the country were some of the first ones there to help. They collected bottled water and distributed it in their own vehicles, going door to door to help, even traveling to Washington, DC, to demand action from Congress. We are so pleased that they helped us get action to help the families in Flint.

That tells us a little something about the character of the members of the UAW. Yet, it also tells us a little bit about their leader—a man who long ago signed up to serve his country and has simply never stopped. I think that Dennis would say it is about solidarity. He wrote in an editorial in the Detroit News last month:

We believe that no matter where you come from, who you are, what language you speak, or what religion you practice—being in a union is about working men and women standing up for each other. That's how it was in 1935 when the UAW was formed, and that's how it is now.

To Dennis Williams, thank you for your service, your hard work, and your dedication to making life better for working men and women so that we can actually have and sustain and grow an American middle class. I know that the members of the UAW join me in wishing you the very best in your well-earned retirement.

I know that my partner and colleague from Michigan will be coming to the floor in just a bit.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, the history of the United Auto Workers is at the heart of what has made the United States a global economic powerhouse. It is tied to the growth of the thriving manufacturing sector and the birth of the American middle class.

Dennis Williams, UAW president since 2014, is a strong contributor to this history. His leadership reflects a deep commitment to American workers and a clear eye toward the future. Since the union's formation in 1935, UAW members have stood together to ensure that their hard work is met with fair wages, safe workplaces, and reasonable hours. For over 80 years, the voice of the UAW has amplified the voice of the American worker. Dennis Williams is a champion of keeping this voice strong in the 21st century.

Williams joined UAW Local 806 as a salvage welder in 1977, following his service in the U.S. Marine Corps. There, he started his long path of elected union leadership and served as chairman of the Bargaining Committee. In the coming years, Williams would rise to the positions of international representative, Region 4 assistant director, and Region 4 director. In 2010, UAW members elected him as secretary-treasurer, followed by the presidency in 2014.

No matter what position Williams undertook during his decades of UAW leadership, he always stayed true to his roots. After becoming UAW president, he prioritized visiting union plants and locals to engage with members directly. He stated: "I love the smell of black coffee and the smoke of the factory and walking up to UAW members and saying, 'brother' or 'sister'."

His passion for everything the UAW stands for, along with his businesslike approach to tough decisions, enabled Williams to take on some difficult challenges during his presidency.

Just as Williams started in his role, Michigan—home to around one-third of UAW members—had recently become a so-called right-to-work State. Michigan is now one of 28 States with policies designed to undermine union participation and workers' rights to collective bargaining. Despite tides of State and Federal anti-worker efforts, Williams remained practical and optimistic about overcoming any challenges that came the UAW's way. He emphasized the importance of sitting down and talking through issues rather than resorting to confrontation.

Williams was steadfast about not giving up on organizing, and he has actively pursued new approaches to organizing that would keep the UAW strong in the future. His strategy has definitely paid off. During Williams' tenure, he successfully fought for the establishment of local unions at Volkswagen and Mercedes locations in the United States and for casino workers in Las Vegas. Under Williams' leadership, UAW membership has increased by almost 7 percent—over 27,000 new members—between 2014 and 2017. The

growth rate and membership over this past year has been the highest in a 1-year period since 2010.

I am deeply honored by Dennis Williams' representation of over 430,000 UAW members, including tens of thousands of workers in my State of Michigan. I wish him well in his retirement, along with his wife, Donna, of 43 years, his sons, Ryan and Matthew, and his grandchildren, Kendahl and Kai.

I know I speak on behalf of many Michigan workers when I sincerely thank Dennis Williams for his admirable service as the UAW's 11th president.

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

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

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 20 minutes as in morning business.

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

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, 30 years ago this month, Dr. James Hansen testified before the U.S. Congress on the need to address climate change—30 years ago this month. He was a top NASA climate scientist. On a hot summer day in June of 1988, before the U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, Dr. Hansen testified that "global warming has reached a level such that we can ascribe with a high degree of confidence a cause and effect relationship between the greenhouse effect and observed warming." He said, "It is already happening now."

Thirty years have passed since then—30 years of added science, 30 years of new science, 30 years of updated reports, and 30 years of mounting evidence of how right Hansen was. Yet, here we still are in Congress still willfully ignoring the unprecedented changes to the climate and the oceans—changes that threaten our planet and its rich array of plant and animal life, changes that put at risk homes, farms, forests, and coasts, changes that affect our very human health and well-being. These are not computer model projections of the distant future but changes we are seeing right before our very eyes now.

Carbon-driven climate change is particularly acute in polar areas. Today, I want to focus on the melting and destabilization of the Antarctic polar ice cap.

Rhode Island is a long way from Antarctica. Florida is a less long way from Antarctica—it is still a pretty long way—but we are coastal States. In Rhode Island, the sea level is already up 11 inches along our shores, and far

more sea level rise, accelerating sea level rise, is expected. The coastal towns and cities in the Presiding Officer's State are seeing similar encroachments of the ocean into their territories.

Here is how Antarctica is changing and what it means for our American shores.

The Antarctic ice sheet spans the South Pole, extending almost 14 million square kilometers—roughly the size of the contiguous United States and Mexico combined. The Antarctic ice sheet is the largest single mass of frozen water on planet Earth, containing 30 million cubic kilometers of ice. If the Antarctic ice sheet were to melt completely, you could actually do fairly simple math as to what would happen to that water. Sea levels could rise 200 feet above current levels, engulfing coastal regions worldwide.

This map shows Florida if we lose the West Antarctic ice sheet. As the map shows, it would inundate much of coastal and southern Florida, putting Miami and other cities completely underwater. It looks about the same here, if you lose the Greenland ice sheet, with there being similar damage and loss to Florida. Yet, here, if you lose the East Antarctic ice sheet, you more or less wipe out the entire State of Florida. You wipe out a few little islands here, a little nub below Georgia there, but essentially Florida is gone.

Imagine the entire population of Florida having to migrate to other States with its State now being uninhabitable. It seems like a crazy notion, but Kentucky's climate planning documents have included the prospect of climate refugees having to flee to Kentucky from America's inundated coasts. So it matters to understand how Antarctic ice sheets work and how they differ from ice shelves.

Ice sheets form on land when more snow accumulates in winter than melts during the summer. Over thousands of years, layers of snow pile up, growing thicker and denser as the weight of new layers compacts the layers below into ice. Over time, that ice flows downhill to the coasts and then ultimately out to sea as glaciers and then ice shelves.

Floating ice shelves surround Antarctica. These shelves physically brace the land-based ice sheet, slowing down its flow into the sea. A rough balance emerges as new snowfall on the ice sheets and the slow flow of the ice balance the melting of the ice shelf around the periphery where the ice shelf meets the ocean. We are now witnessing what appears to be an unraveling of this equilibrium. Climate change is what is causing this massive destabilization.

Since 1950, on the Antarctic Peninsula, the air has warmed 2.5 degrees Celsius. Warming ocean waters erode the West Antarctic ice sheets from below as the warming air melts them from above. Once the ice shelf melts back, you have the loss of the buttress