

respect throughout decades of public service. There is no one better qualified to lead this Russia investigation in terms of intellect, experience, or character than Robert Mueller. A lot of Americans are glad he is leading this effort to find out what happened, how the Russians were able to interfere in our election. Robert Mueller and his team have already produced results, and their work has sent a powerful message to Russia—and to any other foreign or domestic entity that would interfere with our elections—that the United States will not tolerate any attack on our democracy.

Mr. Mueller's investigation is critical to our national security, and it must be protected from interference by the President or anyone else. It is now more important than ever that the Senate pass legislation to protect the investigation and Mr. Mueller's job from interference of any kind. I call on the Senate once again to take a vote on the Special Council Independence and Integrity Act.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the vote scheduled for 1:45 occur now.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Kraninger nomination?

Mr. MORAN. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 50, nays 49, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 255 Ex.]

#### YEAS—50

Alexander	Flake	Murkowski
Barrasso	Gardner	Paul
Blunt	Graham	Perdue
Boozman	Grassley	Portman
Burr	Hatch	Risch
Capito	Heller	Roberts
Cassidy	Hoeven	Rounds
Collins	Hyde-Smith	Rubio
Corker	Inhofe	Sasse
Cornyn	Isakson	Scott
Cotton	Johnson	Shelby
Crapo	Kennedy	Sullivan
Cruz	Kyl	Thune
Daines	Lankford	Toomey
Enzi	Lee	Wicker
Ernst	McConnell	Young
Fischer	Moran	

#### NAYS—49

Baldwin	Cardin	Duckworth
Bennet	Carper	Durbin
Blumenthal	Casey	Feinstein
Booker	Coons	Gillibrand
Brown	Cortez Masto	Harris
Cantwell	Donnelly	Hassan

Heinrich	Menendez	Smith
Heitkamp	Merkley	Stabenow
Hirono	Murphy	Tester
Jones	Murray	Udall
Kaine	Nelson	Van Hollen
King	Peters	Warner
Klobuchar	Reed	Warren
Leahy	Sanders	Whitehouse
Manchin	Schatz	Wyden
Markey	Schumer	
McCaskill	Shaheen	

#### NOT VOTING—1

Tillis

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid on the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 1046.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Justin George Muzinich, of New York, to be Deputy Secretary of the Treasury.

#### CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

#### CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Justin George Muzinich, of New York, to be Deputy Secretary of the Treasury.

Mitch McConnell, Chuck Grassley, Jerry Moran, Lisa Murkowski, John Barrasso, David Perdue, Ron Johnson, Shelley Moore Capito, John Cornyn, Marco Rubio, Tom Cotton, Steve Daines, Michael B. Enzi, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Lamar Alexander, John Kennedy, Deb Fischer.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call be waived.

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

The Senator from Tennessee.

#### U.S.-CHINA FENTANYL AGREEMENT

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, there is uncertainty reported in the news about the trade agreements and discussions that the President of the United States and the President of China had last weekend, but one thing is certain: The agreement that President Trump and the President of China made last Saturday concerning fentanyl—a deadly synthetic opioid which is mostly produced in China and which is the largest growing contributor to opioid deaths in the United States—will save thousands of American lives.

Last Saturday evening, President Trump and President Xi announced that China will designate all fentanyl-like substances as controlled substances, which will make the selling of fentanyl subject to the maximum penalty under Chinese law.

Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid. It can be 100 times stronger than opioid prescription pills. It is the source of the greatest increase in opioid overdoses in our country.

According to our Drug Enforcement Administration, one way or another, almost all of the fentanyl that is used in the United States comes from China. Here is how: Traffickers in China modify the chemical makeup of fentanyl to bypass the authorities. Scheduling all fentanyl-like substances as a class, which is what President Xi agreed to do, is the single most important step that could be taken to stop the flow of deadly fentanyl from China into the United States.

Let me tell you a story about one action that helped us get to that point. About 4 weeks ago, I led a senior delegation of five Senators and two Members of the House of Representatives to Beijing to meet with Chinese leaders. They, of course, expected us to talk about agriculture, energy, and trade issues, which are sources of major disagreement between China and the United States, and we did, but at the urging of the U.S. Ambassador to China, former Iowa Governor Terry Branstad, we made fentanyl and the opioid crisis the primary point of our visit.

President Trump had already mentioned fentanyl to President Xi a few months earlier, and China had already taken steps to help the United States by stemming the flow of fentanyl into our country. China announced that it was controlling 25 different substances of fentanyl. The Drug Enforcement Administration told us while we were in China 4 weeks ago that after China took those steps, there was a dramatic decrease in the amount of fentanyl available in the United States.

In other words, while we were there, we asked China to do more of what it was already doing—instead of controlling just 25 types of fentanyl, to control it all, make it all illegal. Controlling all of it allows China's narcotics agents to go after anyone in China who

uses or produces fentanyl illegally or improperly. The Chinese officials listened closely to us. They committed to working with us. They made no promises at the time about what they would do, but with each meeting we had, we found they must have talked to whom-ever we had talked to at the previous meeting, and they were responsive.

The truth is, I believe they were surprised. They were surprised first that we would make that the first point of our discussion when they had assumed that we would likely be there to talk about tariffs on soybeans and other issues. I think they were surprised to be reminded of or to find out for the first time what a massive problem it is in the United States. More people are being killed by opioid overdoses than are killed by automobile accidents, and the fastest growing source of those opioid overdoses is the synthetic stuff coming from China.

Some of them were surprised and a little defensive because they did not believe it when we said to them—and I said to them directly that one way or the other, almost all of the fentanyl we see in the United States comes from China. It comes in the form of chemicals that are made there in small processing plants. It is shipped to Mexico or to Canada or through the mail, and then it is smuggled into this country illegally. It is often in small plastic bags. It is a white powder.

One of the drug enforcement agents from Tennessee told me that once when he had seized just one package of fentanyl in Dixon County, he opened it, and he had to leave the room to keep from being overcome because enough of it escaped into the air that it had an effect on him. Just a few grams of this will kill an individual.

When we returned from China after our trip 4 weeks ago, I spoke about that trip on the Senate floor. I said that China had the opportunity to become the global leader in stopping synthetic opioids. I talked with Ivanka Trump about our trip. She was helping the President prepare for his trip to Argentina, where he saw leaders from many countries. He had his dinner with the President of China last Saturday night. She helped to make sure that it was a priority in his briefings and in his preparation.

I talked to the President directly to report to him the good work Ambassador Branstad had been doing in China; how 6 months ago, the Ambassador had said to me: When you come to China, make this the focus of your visit because the Chinese officials don't appreciate the importance of this to the United States.

China doesn't have a fentanyl problem. They don't have people using and overdosing from opioids. At one time, China had a terrible problem with opium, but they don't today. So I think it was a surprise to them to see how important it was to us.

I urged President Trump to thank President Xi when they met at the G20

summit in Argentina for what China had already done and to ask the Chinese to continue working with us to stem the flow of fentanyl into the United States.

Last Saturday, at the end of the G20 summit, President Trump and President Xi announced that China would do exactly what we asked them to do. China will control all forms of fentanyl as a way of stopping the flow of this dangerous synthetic opioid into the United States both by mail and by smuggling through Mexico and Canada. President Trump called this "a game changer," and he deserves great credit for persuading China to make the selling of fentanyl subject to the maximum penalty under Chinese law.

In 2016, roughly 45 percent of opioid overdose deaths were due to synthetic opioids like fentanyl—nearly half of the deaths. Remember, there are as many deaths from overdoses as there are from automobile accidents.

To be clear, this is not a problem the Chinese Government has caused, but it is a problem the Chinese Government is helping us solve. Working with our Drug Enforcement Administration and classifying 25 fentanyl compounds caused an immediate and dramatic decrease in those chemicals coming into the United States months ago. Now President Xi has agreed to control all forms of fentanyl, which will make it easier for China to go after anyone in their country who uses or produces fentanyl illegally and improperly.

Opioid abuse is understood by the Senate and House of Representatives to be our No. 1 health epidemic in the country. While most of the country was watching the Kavanaugh hearings in October of this year, if you had a split-screen television, you could have seen on the other side of the television screen 72 Senators of both parties—5 committees here and 8 committees in the House of Representatives—working together to produce landmark opioid legislation to try to deal with our opioid crisis.

Fentanyl, the white powder synthetic opioid, can be 100 times more powerful than an opioid pain pill. A few grams can kill you, which is why we have seen such a spike in overdose deaths. Among drug overdoses, it is the fastest killer. Tennessee saw the number of deaths from fentanyl overdose increase 70 percent in 1 year, between 2016 and 2017.

As I mentioned, in the legislation the President signed in October, Congress has taken action. He called that new law "the single largest bill to combat a drug crisis in the history of our country." Those were his words.

In addition to empowering the Food and Drug Administration to require manufacturers to sell certain opioid pills in so-called blister packs and expanding treatment and recovery opportunities, the new law contains Senator PORTMAN's STOP Act, which will help stop illegal drugs, including fentanyl, at the border. It also includes the

SALTS Act, which closes a loophole that allowed manufacturers and sellers of synthetic opioids like fentanyl to avoid prosecution by labeling the opioids as "not intended for human consumption." Congress has also put the taxpayers' money where our mouth has been. Congress has approved \$8.5 billion since last March to combat the opioid crisis.

What President Trump and President Xi announced this weekend is the single most important step that could be taken to stop the flow of deadly fentanyl from China into the United States.

I thank Ambassador Branstad, the former Governor of Iowa and now our Ambassador to China, for putting a focus on this, for leading our delegation on this specific request, and for setting up the meetings we had with Chinese officials. I also thank the staff members of the U.S. Embassy there for all of their hard work. They were very helpful—Steve Churchill, Rob Fordan, and Richard Jao.

I thank, again, the Chinese officials with whom we met. They gave us a lot of time. If it were to be an hour's discussion, it was an hour and a half. If we started out with fentanyl and it was news to them, they took the time to understand it and talk about it. I thank Premier Li Keqiang, Minister Zhao Kezhi, and Director Yang Jiechi. We saw all of them, which included seeing the head of narcotics control and the head of the police system in China.

I am grateful to the Chinese leaders for listening to our congressional delegation and for President Trump and President Xi's leadership in taking this action.

Some have asked since last Saturday: Well, will China do it? Will this make a difference?

We know it made a difference before. President Trump asked China to help with fentanyl, and China identified 25 forms of it. Our own Drug Enforcement Agency says that it saw a dramatic decrease in fentanyl in the United States immediately after that.

Now we are asking China to make all forms of fentanyl illegal. That means that the crooks in China can't say: Well, they have made illegal these 25 forms, but we will modify the chemicals enough so that we can create chemicals to send to Mexico, Canada, and then to the United States that are not illegal. That will not be possible once China implements this. Once it implements these rules, I expect the rules to be effective. China does a lot of things well. One thing it knows how to do is to be a good policeman when something is against the law. I would not want to be the person in China who is misusing, abusing, or selling fentanyl illegally after these new rules go into effect.

We are asking China only to do what the United States is already doing. We have learned that in order to be effective in controlling fentanyl, we have to control all of it. We have to make all of

it illegal so that our narcotics agencies, our drug agencies, and our policemen can deal with it.

What about the possibility that even if China does this, fentanyl might be made in other countries? Well, maybe it would, but we could take the same steps there that we are taking in China.

This is important in the larger sense. The President of China has listened to the President of the United States, who has said twice to him: Mr. President, fentanyl is a terrible problem in the United States. One way or the other, China is the source of most of the fentanyl that comes here. We believe the single most important thing you could do to help us control that is to make it all illegal. The President of China has said he will do that.

That kind of response, as President Trump said, is a humanitarian gesture that, while it doesn't have to do with trade—it doesn't mean more soybeans are going to be sold—it helps to develop a better relationship between two countries that are not enemies but that are competitors, and we have some big issues we need to work on.

There may be uncertainty in the air about some of the agreements that came out of the dinner that the President of China and the President of the United States had in Argentina last weekend, but there is no uncertainty about this—that the agreement by China, at President Trump's request, to make illegal all forms of fentanyl in China, all classes of it, will save thousands of lives in the United States. China will go from being the source of the biggest opioid problem that the United States has to the country that is doing the most about it. For that, all Americans should be grateful.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

TRIBUTE TO HERB HOLZAPFEL

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I am here this afternoon to congratulate Herb Holzapfel on his retirement as chairman of the Farmers' Rice Cooperative.

The Farmers' Rice Cooperative has a long and distinguished history and an equally long history of influential leaders. Herb stands out as one of those leaders—as one of the very best.

It may seem a little bit odd for a Kansan to be congratulating a Californian, but in this job as a U.S. Senator and in my earlier days as a Congressman, as a Member of the House of Representatives, you have the opportunity to meet lots of wonderful, interesting people. As a person who is so interested in agriculture, I had the opportunity of meeting Herb back in my days in the House of Representatives. He is one of those special people who is a joy to know, and he is someone who has such a strong passion for agriculture, and so we easily connected.

His love of agriculture, his engagement in the industry, and his work in the industry have improved the lives of

farmers and consumers for more than 40 years, including 33 specifically with the Farmers' Rice Cooperative.

Herb is a passionate public servant. His love for public service dates back to his early moments as a boy when he remembers meeting Ronald Reagan. That was an inspiration to Herb. As he was attending the National Scout Jamboree here in the Nation's Capital, which marked the beginning of a life of serving others, he had the opportunity to become acquainted with Ronald Reagan.

Herb grew up with a sense of duty. He was drafted and served in the Vietnam conflict just 1 year after he married Ginger, his wife. Herb joined the National Guard in the same year and began farming rice. He was offered a spot in the 1975 warrant officer helicopter training school, but he had to turn it down in order to get his rice harvested.

Herb has always been on the lookout for opportunities to serve other people and has never shied away from hard work. His father would always tell him that in order to make something better, a person has to be involved. Herb took that message to heart and committed himself to doing things in the right way—to being fully involved.

Herb joined the Farmers' Rice Cooperative in 1985 and became a board member that same year. In 1998 he was elected chairman of the board and has served in that position since then. For 20 years, Herb has fought for the rice producers and has led and represented them in such a fine fashion. Herb has always focused on finding solutions that will make sure that the next generation of farmers and ranchers is better off than the last.

To accomplish that, he has worked with many Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle. As chairman of the co-op, Herb has spent a significant amount of time in Washington, DC, doing just that—representing agricultural producers in the Halls of Congress. He is one of the most genuine people I have ever met. If you meet Herb, you will remember Herb. He goes out of his way to build genuine relationships with Members of Congress, and he knows the importance of our staffs. He has become a trusted adviser and a source of wisdom and good advice to many people in Washington, DC. In so many ways, that includes me. There has been no better ambassador for agriculture, especially for rice, than Herb. It is not uncommon for Herb to take an incoming call from DC while he is on his tractor back at the ranch.

Herb's legacy at the Farmers' Rice Cooperative is one of his great achievements. He has assisted in the reforming of the cooperative over the past 30 years and has impacted every facet of the company, from dealing with the leadership of the co-op down to the nuts and bolts of the rice mill. He is one who has shown me how rice is grown, which is necessary, because no Kansas farmer knows how to grow rice.

His goal has been to leave the company and the industry better than he found it.

I will tell you, Herb, you have achieved that goal in spades.

As I said earlier, Herb never shies away from hard work. This means he will not be slowing down but only changing directions. He will continue to work on the Farm Credit Council's board of directors, which he has been a part of since 2012. Herb's impact on the world of agriculture will continue to be felt for years to come through his work at the Farmers' Rice Cooperative and at the Farm Credit Council.

I thank Herb for his years of advocacy on behalf of agriculture, rice, and all of the things that agriculture is comprised of, including wheat and cattle and corn in Kansas. He made the case for all of us—for our farmers and our ranchers. I appreciate that very much. I appreciate his standing side by side and our being a team in order to see that good things happen in rural America. I wish him the very best in his new phase of life, and I thank him for his service and his friendship.

TRIBUTE TO BILL SNYDER

Mr. President, last Sunday, Kansas State University Head Football Coach Bill Snyder announced his retirement, marking the end of his 56-year career coaching football and 27-year tenure in Manhattan, KS.

Coach Snyder made his debut with the K-State football program in 1989. He took the helm of a program that was known as Futility U and America's most hapless team.

When he arrived, the Wildcats hadn't won a single game in the previous two seasons and had the most losses of any Division One football team.

During the now-famous press conference at the early stages of his tenure at K-State, Coach Snyder remarked that, "I think the opportunity for the greatest turnaround in college football exists here today, and it's not one to be taken lightly."

Kansans know well today that Coach Snyder lived up to those words.

Coach Snyder boasts a great deal of accolades in his storied career: 215 career wins, 19 bowl game appearances, and two Big 12 championships—which seems especially remarkable, given the state of the program when he took over as head coach.

Deeply engrained in Coach Snyder's legacy is the work he has done off the field developing young men, contributing to the community, giving back, and inspiring so many.

Coach Snyder's "16 Goals for Success" have served as guidelines for his players on and off the field.

Snyder said that if his players followed these goals—goals such as "Never Give Up," "Don't Accept Losing," and "Eliminate Mistakes"—then success would come. His "16 goals" represent his own legendary paradigm—that our work is never over and the journey to success is never really finished.

His impact at the university and in Manhattan have reached far beyond the field, where he has helped to increase student enrollment, boost the local economy, and fund major renovation projects across K-State's campus that have allowed for groundbreaking work at the university.

Coach Snyder's involvement, support, and close work with the Johnson Cancer Center at K-State has helped to advance the groundbreaking, scientific research being done there that will one day save lives.

His work in the community to mentor young men and women, develop community leaders, and inspire philanthropy has changed lives across our State. His focus on "family" has created and contributed to a remarkable culture in Manhattan.

Coach Snyder has had to overcome numerous challenges during his tenure as a coach, but he has faced those with the same grit and mental toughness that he has instilled in his players.

Even while battling cancer, coach still hit the road to travel Kansas on Catbacker tours; he didn't let anyone or anything get in the way of him meeting with the program's most loyal fans, a large number of them rural Kansans.

Coach's love for traveling the State and meeting with rural Kansans is something we both share, but I think often times Kansans might be more excited to talk about football than politics.

Coach Snyder repeatedly says he came to Kansas State University because of the people, stayed because of the people, and returned because of the people.

To get to Manhattan, KS, you take Bill Snyder Family Highway. To go to a K-State football game, you go to Bill Snyder Family Stadium. On your way into the stadium, you walk by a larger-than-life statue of Coach Bill Snyder. His legacy is permanently sealed in the K-State and Manhattan community.

History will remember Coach Snyder as an incredibly successful football coach and developer of young men, someone with an extraordinary work ethic and a high level of integrity.

I appreciate the impact Coach Bill Snyder has had at Kansas State University. His legacy will be forever enshrined there. Robba and I wish all the best for Coach, Sharon, and the entire Snyder family in this new chapter of their lives.

I yield the floor.

**THE PRESIDING OFFICER.** The Senator from South Dakota.

REMEMBERING GEORGE H.W. BUSH

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, on Friday, George Herbert Walker Bush, the 41st President of the United States, went to his eternal reward.

His death marks the passing of an era. George H.W. Bush was the last President to have served in World War II. He enlisted on his 18th birthday, postponing college to serve his country, and went on to become the young-

est pilot in the Navy. During his 3 years of service, he flew 58 combat missions and was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and three Air Medals.

Throughout his life, he exemplified the characteristics of the "greatest generation"—service, love of country, humility, and honor.

His achievements in public office were significant. As Vice President, he helped Ronald Reagan turn the economy around and combat the "evil empire." As President, he presided over the dissolution of the Soviet Union and helped bring order and stability to the world stage in its aftermath. Through it all, he stayed humble and down-to-earth.

This week, I saw an article with anecdotes from Secret Service agents who had protected President Bush. What stood out to me the most was the fact that he used to stay in Washington over Christmas so his Secret Service agents could spend the day with their families. That was the kind of man he was.

We throw around the words "public service" in government, but for George Bush, that term meant something. Public service was a real thing to him.

Being a Congressman, being CIA Director, being an ambassador, being President—these weren't chances to aggrandize himself or to burnish his resume. These were chances to serve, to give something back to the country he loved and had fought to protect.

President Bush was a statesman, a man of principle who understood that you could speak the truth without demonizing your opponents. He and President Clinton may have been political adversaries, but that didn't stop him from teaming up with President Clinton to raise money for victims of Hurricane Katrina in the 2004 tsunami.

He was also, as every American knows, a devoted family man, a beloved father, grandfather, and great-grandfather. He and his wife Barbara, who died earlier this year, were married for 73 years—the longest marriage of any Presidential couple in our Nation's history. The love and affection and friendship between them were palpable.

By now, I think most Americans have seen the moving image from cartoonist Marshall Ramsey paying tribute to President Bush. In a cartoon, President Bush is depicted as having flown his World War II plane, a TBM Avenger, to Heaven. There, he joins hands with his beloved daughter Robin and his beloved wife, who says: "We waited for you." I am sure their reunion was a joyful one.

I yield the floor.

**THE PRESIDING OFFICER.** The Senator from Rhode Island.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I am both pleased and honored that my distinguished friend Senator FEINSTEIN is joining me today to discuss how climate change is affecting our country,

from the East to the West, from one of the biggest States to the smallest one. Of course, we are small in size, but we are long on coastline.

As the Presiding Officer will understand, as coastal States, Rhode Island, California, and the coastal States along the South Atlantic coasts are on the frontlines of climate change. Sea levels are already rising, and as they do, Rhode Island's coastal communities are having to spend more and more money on resiliency projects to protect their roads, their bridges, their beaches, their water treatment plants, their harbors, and other infrastructure.

A 2000 study by our DEM found that 7 of 19 water treatment facilities in Rhode Island are expected to be overwashed by floodwaters driven by climate change. Frankly, just figuring out what this risk looks like is hard for coastal municipalities, so our State's Coastal Resources Management Council developed a project called STORMTOOLS, which allows Rhode Islanders to see how sea level rise is expected to affect their homes, their businesses, their beaches, and their parks.

This is a STORMTOOLS-generated map of Upper Narragansett Bay. The blue color you see here is all land. People have homes and businesses and facilities there. All of this blue is now land, but it is land that gets covered by 10 feet of sea level rise. Ten feet of sea level rise is within STORMTOOLS' business-as-usual scenario in which we continue to burn fossil fuels unabated.

As you can see, some of Rhode Island's peninsulas get cut off to become islands, some of our islands disappear or fracture. Rhode Island becomes an archipelago. I hope my colleagues on the other side can appreciate that changes like this to my State are things I have to respond to.

A recent New York Times article suggested we may have to retreat from the coasts in order to protect ourselves from rising waters and more powerful storms. Why should Rhode Islanders have to retreat from our coasts just to protect polluters? It makes no sense. It is fundamentally unjust.

Many of us not only live near the sea but work and sail and fish on it, so climate change threatens Rhode Islanders' lifestyles, our livelihoods, and our lives.

The Union of Concerned Scientists has estimated for the United States that by 2100, nearly 2.5 million residential and commercial properties, collectively valued at \$1.07 trillion today, will be at risk of chronic flooding, and that is just from sea level rise alone. Storm surge and rain-driven flooding amplify that risk.

Drill down to Rhode Island, and Zillow, the real estate firm, has estimated that over 5,300 homes worth almost \$3 billion will be lost if the sea level rises just 6 feet. And that is just homes that are already there. People are still building in Rhode Island's coastal areas, so there are more new homes every day.

Why should Rhode Islanders have to face this risk? Why should 5,300 people have to risk losing their homes just to protect polluters? It is not right.

Rising water isn't the only way in which climate change is affecting the oceans off our coasts. Warming oceans are disrupting our traditional fishing grounds and driving valuable species like lobster out of Rhode Island waters altogether.

The just-released National Climate Assessment warns of falling catches. Last week I met with charter boat captains and recreational fishing enthusiasts from Rhode Island and nearby New England. They, like their peers in Louisiana, are facing changes in the size, geographic range, and number of fish that they catch.

Our commercial fishermen tell the same story. They are worried that their kids and grandkids will not be able to experience the traditions and lifestyles they cherish or pursue the same career on the water.

Why should Rhode Island have to lose this heritage just to protect polluters?

Senator FEINSTEIN has seen similar changes in California, and I welcome her remarks.

I ask unanimous consent that Senator FEINSTEIN and I be allowed to engage in a colloquy.

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

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. I thank the Senator from Rhode Island.

Yes, we are already feeling dramatic changes in California.

Let me give you an example. Off our coast, the ocean has become 25 to 45 percent more acidic. It has 20 percent less oxygen, and it is nearly a full degree warmer than previous decades. All of that is according to the National Climate Assessment.

These conditions have led to harmful algal blooms, a marine heat wave from 2014 to 2016, invasive Humboldt squid, the disruption of the crab, shellfish, and fishing industry. So it is being felt.

In fact, the impact has been so great, a number of Pacific coast fishermen are now suing 30 fossil fuel companies for damages.

At the same time, the seas are rising. The longest running tidal gauge in the Western Hemisphere is at the Golden Gate Bridge, and it has been recording sea levels since 1854.

Now, as this chart shows—and this is sea level rise at the Golden Gate Bridge—the sea has risen 9 inches in that time, which the National Climate Assessment attributes mostly to thermal expansion of ocean water and the melting of glaciers and polar ice sheets. This is already threatening San Francisco's historic waterfront. The seawall is seriously deteriorating and must be upgraded to handle the stronger storms and higher tides we are already seeing and will continue to see in the future.

I just met a week or so ago with the head of the Bay Area Rapid Transit

System, and that is BART II, and they are talking about increasing the number of trains in the II by some three times. One wonders what is going to happen if the seawall continues to deteriorate. The city will move. It is going to be very costly, but it will be repaired. But it is a signal of what is coming.

Last month, our city's residents approved a \$425 million bond to help pay for the project of restoring the Embarcadero Seawall. As you can see, we are looking at another 2.5 to 3.5 feet of sea rise by the end of this century. If you just look at this chart, you see the amount of sea rise.

Worse, if ice sheets in Greenland and Antarctica collapse into the oceans, the "Climate Science Special Report" last year warned that sea levels could rise as high as 8 feet by the end of this century. That is an 8-foot rise by the end of this century. That would truly be catastrophic.

Scientists are carefully studying the Greenland and Antarctica ice sheets, as the Senator from Rhode Island well knows, to understand whether we can slow or avoid their collapse into the ocean. Last year alone, we saw an iceberg larger than the size of the State of Rhode Island break off of Antarctica's Larsen C ice shelf. Events like this could give us clues into what large-scale melting may look like.

Antarctica holds 90 percent of the world's ice, and the rate of ice melting and calving increased six-fold from 1994 to 2012—a six-time increase in 10 years. It is amazing.

According to an eye-opening report from National Geographic last year, if the West Antarctic ice sheet collapses, as some researchers think may already be happening, it will eventually raise sea levels worldwide by 10 feet. This is a picture right out of National Geographic. A whole issue is devoted to this and the rifting of this huge glacier and what happens when it breaks out. That is where there are different views, of course, but some say the seas could rise as much as 10 feet.

I really suspect, between you and me and the outside world, that it is going to be some calamitous effect that shakes us up enough to do what we need to do about it. We have been very slow to respond.

National Geographic reports, as well, that 90 percent of the 674 glaciers in this area of the continent are now in retreat—90 percent of them—and calving more icebergs into the sea; that means they are splitting and breaking off, including the one that is photographed right here. A full collapse of the ice sheets in Greenland and West Antarctica would eventually raise sea levels about 35 feet, it is estimated.

I drove through the San Francisco Marina District, and I thought, Oh, my gosh, what can happen in 15, 20, 50 years—our grandchildren—and it is really startling.

But rising sea levels are far from the only problem. Wildfire and drought are

already reshaping my State. The California drought from 2011 to 2016 was made worse because of climate change: higher temperatures, depleted groundwater, and reduced snowpack. Large parts of California, including the Central Valley, which produces the majority of our Nation's fruits and vegetables, had to depend on groundwater pumping that will not always be available, and the National Climate Assessment warns that global warming will reduce the rate that groundwater replenishes aquifers by 10 to 20 percent. So we have a real problem.

I want to add to that. I have been to big fires; as a matter of fact, I traveled with President Bush to a San Diego fire in a subdivision, and then, years later, I went to the Sonoma fire. It was a fire that burned so hot that the subdivision I visited, which was the Coffey subdivision—the block that had houses on all four sides was entirely burned down, and the ground had turned to sand. There wasn't a metal structure; there wasn't a brick chimney; there was nothing that was above ground.

I called one of the chiefs, the head of State fire, and I said: Tell me what is happening.

He said: The Santa Anas have reversed. The winds are blowing 40 to 60 knots. The fire outruns us, and we can't lay line.

So what happened—and the meaning, of course, is that you depend more and more on air, which means C-130s, and having to get them. Fortunately we got seven, and I went and saw that two are being repaired and adjusted to carry water. But that is what is happening, and we really have to come to terms with it.

This new, big fire, which is the largest fire California has ever had, burned down 15,000 homes, if you can believe it. This is a picture of what the area looks like. Wildfire alone has burned nearly 2 million acres now—15,000 homes. It has killed 94 people. And wildfire is the deadliest and most destructive season we have on record this year.

This picture was taken by a member of my staff in the city of Paradise, which was absolutely devastated, as you can tell—hulls of cars. I have even been to a fire that has burned so hot that you don't see any of the surrounding door metal, and you don't see any tires left.

So the terror of fire—and just as an anecdote, I read one story about an elderly couple who left their home and jumped in the pool, and he held his wife in the pool all night, and she passed away in his arms. This is the kind of thing we face in California.

Let me ask the Senator from Rhode Island this: Wildfires are a problem for more than just Western States. Haven't fires affected even Rhode Island on the other coast?

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Senator FEINSTEIN, the fires have affected us—nothing like what you describe. Our State has not burned. Our State is not like

California today, still smoldering from such a massive fire. We don't have the devastation of the photograph that you just showed us, but it has sure affected our air quality.

All the way across the continent, the fires we have had in California, Oregon, and Canada have affected the Atlantic States as far south as North Carolina. As you know, these fires lost tremendous amounts of what they call fine particulates into the atmosphere, and those fine particulates exacerbate asthma and other respiratory conditions, increase the risk of diseases like lung cancer. In a nutshell, bad air equals bad health, and we are getting bad air from these fires.

Of course, forest fires aren't the only way that climate change degrades Rhode Island's air quality. You just make the air warmer, which global warming is doing, and hotter temperatures help to form more ozone. Ozone, as we know, is dangerous for children and the elderly and anybody with a respiratory condition.

One in ten Rhode Islanders has asthma. Our air quality receives a grade of C from the American Lung Association, largely from forces out of our control—out-of-State sources and ozone coming in from upwind States.

This is not just an inconvenience. Across the country, air pollution, much of it made worse by climate change, causes a staggering 200,000 premature deaths each year. Why should Rhode Islanders have to put up with that just to protect polluters?

Of course, those aren't the only ways that climate change affects human health. Temperature extremes worsen health. There have been studies both in Rhode Island and in Senator FEINSTEIN's State that show that as temperatures rise, there are more deaths, often not associated in the coroner's report with heat but clearly statistically following the heat.

ER visits in Rhode Island skyrocket when daily temperatures pass 80 degrees Fahrenheit, and the National Climate Assessment, based on a study of Rhode Island hospitals, predicts that the number of ER visits will increase from these conditions by 400 per year by 2050 and up to an additional 1,500 a year by 2095.

Of course, the list of health consequences goes on: disease-carrying insects, such as ticks and mosquitoes; noxious algal blooms, as the Senator from California mentioned, that produce water-borne toxins and pathogens; longer pollen seasons ramping up people's allergies.

Why should Rhode Islanders or Californians have to put up with these conditions just to protect polluters?

Of course, it is not just the doctors who are worried; economists are starting to paint some very grim pictures. Freddie Mac, our great housing corporation, warns of a coastal property values crash that will rival the 2008 mortgage meltdown. I quote them:

The economic losses and social disruption [ . . . ] are likely to be greater in total than

those experienced in the housing crisis and Great Recession.

The Bank of England and numerous academic economists warn of a "carbon bubble"—a separate economic risk that poses what they call a systemic risk to the global economy.

Of course, the National Climate Assessment details grim economic consequences that climate change will have for our U.S. economy. Of course, it doesn't have to be bad economic news. Nobel Prize-winning economist Joseph Stiglitz testified that "retrofitting the global economy for climate change would help to restore aggregate demand and growth. . . . [C]limate policies, if well designed and implemented, are consistent with growth, development, and poverty reduction. The transition to a low-carbon economy is potentially a powerful, attractive, and sustainable growth story, marked by higher resilience, more innovation, more liveable cities, robust agriculture, and stronger ecosystems."

Why would we not want that? That is the advice of a Nobel Prize-winning economist.

A 2018 report from the Global Commission on the Economy and Climate estimates that this green energy transition may increase global economic growth by \$26 trillion through 2030 and create 65 million low-carbon jobs. Growth will come not just from those new jobs but also from lower energy costs. As Stiglitz points out, transitioning to renewables can reduce costs. To quote him, "Many energy efficiency technologies actually have a negative cost to implement."

Renewable energy, electric cars, battery storage, carbon capture, energy efficiency, low-carbon and zero-carbon fuels—these are technologies of the future, promising millions of great jobs. The question is whether these will be American technologies and American jobs or whether China, Germany, Japan, or other countries will win the transition to a low-carbon economy. Why should America lose that competition just to protect polluters?

Senator FEINSTEIN can eloquently tell us how innovation is California's bread and butter, so let me inquire of the distinguished chairman/ranking member. What kind of exciting developments are you seeing in California?

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. I am sorry; what kind of?

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Exciting developments in innovation are you seeing in California.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. There are all kinds of exciting developments and innovation. Let me talk a little bit more about it.

My understanding is that for 2018, researchers expect that emissions will grow by 2.4 percent, and the United States is part of this trend, showing a 2.5-percent increase in emissions due to our oil and gas use.

So the first thing is that we need to move away from carbon, and we need to do it quickly. California is pro-

ducing—you can use noncarbon electricity, and it works.

One of the things I have been really concerned about as a grandmother is, as time goes by, what is the impact? If I understand the history well, the Earth has warmed, since the Industrial Revolution, about 1 to 2 degrees. They say that if it warms another 1 to 2 degrees, it is handleable, but it will be difficult. If it warms 4 to 9 degrees, we will have the potential to destroy the planet. I think those figures, as they become more refined as time goes on, really send us the challenge.

It is hard here because—it was hard in California. Until I went home on this last break, I had never seen people on the streets with masks on. Yet there it was in San Francisco, by the Golden Gate, with the wind blowing, and the smoke was so thick in the morning that when you looked out a window, you were lucky if you could see two blocks. Those are the kinds of fires that warming encourages.

So I want to salute you for your work. You have been our leader. I think you have been terrific. I think what we really need to do is to set some standards for our government to follow as they set regulations for the future. It is going to be difficult, people won't like it, and there will be differences between us, but we should have that discussion, and we should recognize the fact that we can't keep going as we are now.

Now, California is responding. As I drove and campaigned there through many different counties and saw some of the alternatives to carbon in terms of the towers and wind and those kinds of things—you see where it is happening, but it is not happening enough, and it is not taken as seriously as it should be.

So what I want to say is that I really want to work with you. I believe the people of my State—all 40-plus million of us—want a solution that will work. I thank you, and I am delighted to be part of this small dialogue.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I thank the Senator. Of course, California's massive economy is a vitally important part of the innovation that is going to help solve this problem if we can get the political will and the economic alignments to do this.

Rhode Island, of course, has its own small innovation story. We are the first State to get offshore wind, steel in the water, and electrons on the grid. We are very proud of the company that did it. Indeed, the market has responded quite favorably. They have been bought for half a billion dollars by a larger company. That is great progress for Rhode Island.

We are a leader in the composites industry. One of our composites companies, TPI Composites, is manufacturing wind blades for wind towers that spin turbines and generate electricity. We also got our first electric buses in Providence, and the electric bus bodies were built by the same group in Warren, RI, to be light, clean, and efficient.



In 10 years, TPI has manufactured more than 10,000 wind blades and is gearing up to provide more than 3,350 bus bodies. So things are moving.

Our university is following on. It received \$19 million in funding from the National Science Foundation for “developing a new research infrastructure to assess, predict and respond to the effects of climate variability on coastal ecosystems.” We have to bring innovation to bear on the changes that are coming, and we have to bring innovation to bear to protect against the changes that will be devastating if we don’t act responsibly.

I hope that we as a body in the Senate take the message from what is happening around us—your fires, Louisiana’s floods, Rhode Island’s sea level rise, and predictions for turning ourselves into an archipelago—and begin to take this seriously, or we could just keep protecting the polluters.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. If I may respond just briefly, the State has mandated that 50 percent of its electricity must come from renewable sources by 2030. We are actually ahead of schedule and on track to reach that deadline by 2020. If we do, we will both be here. I hope that will be a real signal to people that standards can be set and they can be met and that we can save this planet.

I thank the Senator very much.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I thank the Senator.

Senator FEINSTEIN may remember, I came here in 2007. I was sworn in in January of 2007. In 2007 and in 2008 and in 2009, just what we would expect to be happening on an issue like this was actually happening in the Senate. By my recollection, we had four bipartisan climate bills, we had bipartisan climate hearings, and we had constant bipartisan climate conversations. This was an issue which was being taken seriously by this body through 2009, then in 2010 something happened, and all of that bipartisan work came to a screeching, dead halt. What happened was that the Supreme Court—five Republican Justices on the Supreme Court—issued a decision called *Citizens United*, which told big industries, big special interests like the fossil fuel industry: You can now spend as much money as you want in politics. There are no limits on what you can spend. That industry took off like a gunshot, like a runner from the start with that decision—I suspect they anticipated it—and instantly shut down all bipartisanship on climate change by virtue of the political spending and threats that *Citizens United* allowed them to do.

If we could do it before *Citizens United*, we ought to be able to do it still now that we have a better understanding of what the threats are. This is a very real proposition to get something done, and I thank the Senator for her leadership over many years on this and many causes.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. I thank the Senator.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I thank the Senator, and I yield the floor.

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

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

#### HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

##### SERGEANT FIRST CLASS ERIC EMOND

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, the Global War on Terror that started 17 years ago continues. Today we formally call the missions undertaken in the War on Terror Operation Freedom’s Sentinel and Operation Inherent Resolve. Brave American troops continue selflessly serving these missions in defense of our country. It is often an overlooked or neglected news story. It doesn’t make the headlines frequently, but families throughout the country who have loved ones in the Middle East are closely monitoring the latest developments there. Their loves ones are still in harm’s way in places like Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria.

This war is being prosecuted at considerable costs. Many have made the ultimate sacrifice, including Army SFC Eric Emond, a member of 1st Battalion, 3rd Special Forces Group, who called Springdale, AK, home when he enlisted in the Marine Corps 21 years ago. He dedicated his career to the military, serving in the Marines and later joining the Army.

In 2009, while serving in Afghanistan, he was severely wounded. During his recovery, he cofounded the Massachusetts Fallen Heroes—an organization launched to honor the fallen and to support Gold Star Families. He was on his seventh tour of duty when he was killed in action last month.

I pray that the Emond family can find comfort in the support of others who have experienced the pain of losing a loved one and who have been aided by the organization Sergeant Emond passionately advocated for.

Many brave Americans are still fighting and selflessly serving, putting their lives on the line every day to defend this country against terrorists and nations that wish to assert malign influence in the world.

We have a duty to honor their commitment to our country and to those who paid the ultimate sacrifice. In the coming days, Congress will have an opportunity to name the Department of Veterans Affairs facility in North Ogden, UT, the Major Brent Taylor Vet Center Outstation in honor of the city’s mayor, a member of the Utah Army National Guard who, during his fourth military deployment, gave his life in support of the mission in Afghanistan last month. Let us never forget the sacrifices of our troops and let their legacies be an inspiration for all Americans.

On behalf of a grateful nation, I humbly offer my sincerest gratitude for the

patriotism and selfless service of the men and women who serve in our Nation’s uniform, the families who support their noble endeavor, and to those who gave their all.

We must remember the many brave Americans, past and present, who stand in defense of our country. Certainly, we need to remember those on a daily basis. These men and women deserve our attention and admiration for answering the call to serve and risking comfort, life, and limb to protect our freedom.

With that, 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. 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.

#### FLORIDA EVERGLADES

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I wish to speak about one of the world’s great natural treasures, the Florida Everglades. Eighteen years ago, there was an anniversary; as a matter of fact, it was in December of 2000. One of the major water bills that Congress passes, usually about every 5 to 7 years, was enacted, and they typically contain Army Corps of Engineers’ projects for water handling, water channeling the great rivers and lakes of America. All of these water projects are so vital to the economic functioning of this country. This water bill was passed back in December of 2000 to provide funding for projects on ports, dams, and beach renourishment projects all across the country. It also authorized for the first time the comprehensive restoration plan for America’s Florida Everglades. It was a 30-year, multibillion dollar effort to restore the Everglades.

What had happened, ever since the beginning of the previous century—in the early 1900s—as Florida started to be discovered and as people increasingly had come, the way it was paved in the late 1800s, with Henry Flagler building his railroad, the railroad went down the east coast of Florida. He would build it as far as he could get, first to St. Augustine, where there was built a big hotel. That hotel today is the administrative building of Flagler College in downtown St. Augustine.

Then Flagler extended it further to the Daytona-Ormond Beach location, where another big hotel was built. Taking it further south, all the way to West Palm Beach, the famed Breakers hotel in Palm Beach was built, as well as a Biltmore hotel.

Finally, Henry Flagler took it on to Miami and then did a feat thought impossible and went through a string of islands called the Florida Keys. He took the railroad all the way to Key West.

This was a means of travel that opened up to Americans in the Northeast this beautiful land called La Florida in Spanish, the name given by the

Spanish conquistadors who came to Florida. Indeed, they came and they loved this land.

As more and more people came and started settling, they found that sometimes Mother Nature was harsh. When Mother Nature came in its full display of fury, hurricanes would come; quick rainstorms would come; quick changes of temperature occurred, from warm to suddenly freezing, even with—albeit, not a lot of snow, but I have seen parts of Florida with the ground covered in snow and other parts that were pelted with freezing rain.

As people tried to adapt to this land of contrasting environments, all of a sudden, they started to see nature, and along in the late 1920s came a hurricane of such magnitude that when it hit the coast around West Palm Beach and then went inland to Lake Okeechobee, 3,000 people drowned.

As a result of that experience, the governmental structure said: We have to do something about flood control. Thus, the diking and draining for three-quarters of a century commenced under the rubric of flood control that would get the water off the land when too much water came at one time. But what happened was, suddenly they had a plan to reverse what Mother Nature had intended. Mother Nature intended for water as far north as southwest of today's Orlando to slowly flow south all the way into the big lake, Lake Okeechobee, and continue on into the Florida Everglades.

What happened with all this diking and draining was it was taking away that natural flow of water. In order to get the water off the land in times of flooding, they created big dikes and canals that would send the water out into the tidewater of the Atlantic in the east and the Gulf of Mexico in the west.

Take, for example, coming south of Orlando in the Kissimmee chain of lakes into what was a meandering stream called the Kissimmee River, where it slowly wandered southward through the oxbows with all the marsh grasses, cleansing the water as it went south and then entering into that big lake called Okeechobee, which did not have defined boundaries but, instead, marshy grasses all around the lake. The water, by gravity, continued to flow south into a natural extension of the marshy grasses, into the miles and miles of river grass that Marjory Stoneman Douglas had declared so beautifully as the “river of grass,” the Florida Everglades. So Lake Okeechobee had a way of taking care of its water and keeping it clean.

After losing 3,000 people in that hurricane, the idea was to control the water—dike and drain it; dike the lake and drain it to the east and to the west, eventually into the St. Lucie River to go into the Atlantic and into the Caloosahatchee, to go into the Gulf of Mexico. So meandering streams like the Kissimmee River were suddenly diked and dug into a straight ditch. It

was catastrophic for the sensitive estuaries that were cleansing the water as it moved south. It was catastrophic for the estuaries, where so many of the critters had the nursery grounds for their young, as well as the many fish species.

Lo and behold, across the entire southern peninsula of Florida, a dike was built called Tamiami Trail, a paved road from Miami over to the west coast, just south of Fort Myers and Naples. That, in effect, became a dike across the southern peninsula of Florida that did not allow the water to flow further south into what, ultimately, as a result of President Harry Truman's signing it into law, became the Everglades National Park. Consequently, the Everglades National Park was then starved of freshwater.

The consequences of all of those actions over almost a century are painfully visible in years like this one. Because of the pollution of that water, instead of the grasses cleansing it, toxic blue-green algae chokes the rivers and spreads all the way out to the Atlantic Ocean to the east and to the Gulf of Mexico to the west.

People have seen in this past year the dramatic images of dead fish covering the water's surface, covering the beach on the west coast and, lo and behold, ultimately that phenomenon of red tide being supercharged with green algae. Ultimately, it went around the peninsula and up the east coast, and we saw dead fish on the beaches of the Atlantic coast as well.

We need to return the waterflow to the flow that Mother Nature intended. That is what the restoration of the Everglades is all about, and that is how that started 18 years ago this month, with a comprehensive plan to turn around that flood control—that diking and draining of all of the southern half of the peninsula of Florida, which has now caused so many of the unintended effects.

If you think about it, when the ecosystem is healthy, the Everglades are healthy. When the ecosystem is sick, all of the rest of that beautiful ecosystem is going to be sickly as well. What we have seen with the little bit of cleaning up we have done is that the Everglades are amazingly resilient. The environment and the Everglades are the heart and soul of Florida. These precious natural resources deserve our protection and stewardship because now they provide drinking water for millions and millions of people in South Florida who have moved there and for a major agricultural industry.

The Everglades also provide storm protection. That is why the ongoing Everglades restoration effort is so important. We need to ensure that the Everglades are there to provide a buffer the next time a hurricane rolls through.

We understand there is a link between warming ocean temperatures and hurricane intensity. If the climate trends continue—and I will reference

my speech on climate change and global warming and the rising of the seas that I gave last week. As that climate trend continues, if we don't reverse it, then it is all the more important to fortify Mother Nature's best defenses.

Not only are beaches and the preservation of them as one of those defenses important, but so are the Florida Everglades. Beaches, wetlands, coral reefs, mangroves all protect us against storm damage. We saw that during Hurricane Sandy in the Northeast and Hurricane Matthew in Florida. We are learning that proved true again during Hurricane Irma. That is why it is so critical that we preserve our natural infrastructure and conserve the undeveloped lands. As that famous Floridian, Marjory Stoneman Douglas said:

There are no other Everglades in the world. . . . The miracle of the light pours over the green and brown expanse of saw grass and of water, shining and slow-moving below, the grass and water that is the meaning and the central fact of the Everglades of Florida. It is a river of grass.

Since I have been privileged to be a Member of the Senate, the Federal Government has spent almost \$5 billion on Everglades restoration. We have some great things to show for it, but we have a long way to go.

Wading birds is an example. They are returning to the Kissimmee River floodplain. Water is finally flowing under that dike that was built in the 1920s—the Tamiami Trail. Now there is a breach of a mile-long bridge, and there is another 2½-mile bridge that is under construction to allow that water to flow south into the Everglades National Park.

We are seeing the return of native wildlife in areas where projects are still underway.

I referenced the Central Everglades Restoration Project that was passed in the water bill 18 years ago. It was originally envisioned as a 30-year plan because we knew we couldn't reverse all of the drainage and the engineering overnight. Out of 30 years, we are into the 18th year, with 12 more to go. It is a long-term effort, and it requires two things: diligent oversight over the ongoing work and an unwavering dedication to achieving Florida's goal of a restored Everglades.

This Senator, whose family came to Florida in 1829, is a fifth-generation Floridian. I understand this is an important project to protect our beautiful natural treasures, but what happens if we don't?

We have all seen the environmental and economic wreckage, for example, from an oilspill. We have seen NASA images from space of mangroves flattened after a hurricane. As the hurricanes get stronger, more ferocious, and more intense, that will be a result, as well as the wiping out of beaches.

All too often in recent years, this Senator has seen the devastating impact of toxic algae blooms on communities all over the Peninsula of Florida and even into North Florida. When you



take a body of water and throw a sack of fertilizer in it, the combination of heat and the nutrients are going to grow algae in most any light but especially in the warm climate of Florida. As a result, by that same example, if you take our freshwater in Florida and allow pollution to go into that because the pollution is not properly regulated, it puts the nutrients into the freshwater that will grow the algae. The algae will suck the oxygen from the water, and that becomes a dead river or a dead lake. All those extra nutrients then, when they hit the saltwater on the Atlantic coast or the Gulf of Mexico, supercharge other phenomenon that lives in saltwater, such as the red tide. We have seen that devastating impact.

There was a Floridian whom we recently lost, Nat Reed. He was particularly attuned to the needs of Florida's environment. We are going to honor his legacy in a memorial service this coming weekend. We are doing that because Nat Reed was one of the great defenders of Florida's natural bounty, especially the Everglades. In the 1970s, he served both Presidents Nixon and Ford. He returned to Florida, and he worked under seven different Governors in many different environmental capacities, including as chairman of the Commission on Florida's Environmental Future. Back in the 1980s, that commission was instrumental in the land acquisition projects we now know as Everglades Restoration.

For Nat Reed, his children and his grandchildren, for all of the current and future generations of Floridians, let's honor the legacy of Nat Reed, and let's stay the course over the next 12 years of this Central Everglades Restoration Project. Let's complete it and restore America's Everglades.

I yield the floor.

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

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

#### EARTHQUAKE IN ALASKA

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, it is Thursday afternoon, and it is the time of the week when I usually come down to talk about one of my constituents or some Alaskan who is doing a great thing for their community or the State or the country. I call that our Alaskan of the Week. I am going to suspend that this week because, to be perfectly honest, I think every one of my fellow Alaskans deserves a shout-out. Maybe they are all Alaskans of the Week this week for what happened and, then, their reaction to what happened in Alaska last Friday. The country read about it, but it is the earthquake—the very significant earthquake—that my State and my hometown of Anchorage just went through.

Mr. President, as you know, last Friday morning, at 8:29 a.m., the citizens of Southcentral Alaska, which includes Anchorage and the Mat-Su Valley, were doing what they always do on a Friday morning. People were in their offices, driving to work, drinking coffee at home, or maybe taking a run on many of the paved trails throughout our wonderful city. Students were either in school or almost getting to school, sitting at their desks with pencils and pens in hand, and then the shaking began. It felt like it went on forever.

I was here in DC. My wife was at our home in Anchorage. She sent me a text and said: We are having a big, massive earthquake. And we did. It was 7.0 on the Richter scale, which is a big earthquake—a big earthquake even for Alaska. Moments later, another earthquake measuring 5.8 on the Richter scale hit. The epicenter was very close to downtown Anchorage, about 7 miles north.

People all across the area ran out of their houses, their offices, and dove under their desks. Roads collapsed, pipes broke, and ceiling tiles came crashing down. Household goods cracked. Kitchens all across the State looked like they had been invaded by violent giants. Thousands of people lost power, including my home in Anchorage.

Senator MURKOWSKI and I and Congressman YOUNG were here in DC. I am going to talk about that a minute. We went home soon after to see what happened, to see the damage.

You saw the previous slide there. Senator MURKOWSKI and I were out reviewing and assessing some of the damage. This is a photo of an on-ramp to Minnesota Avenue, actually leading to the airport. That collapsed completely. That is how people get to the airport.

Vine Road in the Mat-Su Valley, a major thoroughfare there, completely, essentially, imploded. Houses and businesses were shook dramatically. There is another picture of Vine Road there. That is the road that you just saw. It was rush hour in Alaska.

Unfortunately, we are having a lot of problems with homes and businesses. This is a photo of just one of the hundreds of businesses, ceilings collapsing, entire offices ruined, and schools. The schools throughout the State suffered a lot of damage. In libraries, there were not just shelves collapsing. Books fly off the shelves when you have a 7.0 earthquake. There is another photo of some of the schools with ceilings collapsing and rebar coming out. This is a classroom.

In my view, just having been out there for a couple of days back home, there is at least hundreds of millions of dollars of damage that we saw, and it is still happening. When you have an earthquake of this magnitude, you have aftershocks, which are also very stressful and can be big and can do more damage.

We have had over 2,700 aftershocks in the Anchorage Ball. This is the An-

chorage Ball right here. Twenty of them have been over 4.0, and five have been over 5.0. That is a big earthquake—a 5.0 earthquake. So we have had five more of those. That is stressful, as you can imagine.

People are tired. The first night after the earthquake, nobody was sleeping because of the number of aftershocks.

When I was home, I felt a number of these, but Alaskans are resilient. They have grit. They have spirit. They are tough. The phrase going around to describe the State right now is "shaken"—certainly, still shaken, still going on today—"not broken." There is frustration, and the country is going to need their help to rebuild. I have no doubt that is going to happen here.

Here is the amazing thing. I think it is a Christmas miracle. You saw that destruction. You saw that at rush hour—kids in all of these classrooms, and there were no fatalities, not one death. You can rebuild a road, and you can rebuild a school, but if we were burying our kids right now, this would be a very, very different tragedy.

Remember, just going to work, it was dark. It is dark in Alaska in the morning. It is dark during a lot of the day now in Alaska. It was cold, and yet there were no fatalities and very few injuries.

So what happened? How did that happen? Somebody asked: Where is the positive story here?

Well, we get a lot of earthquakes in Alaska. This is just a chart that shows, from a couple of years ago, what kind of earthquakes we get. The Presiding Officer knows I come and talk about my State a lot, but here are just a few stats on earthquakes.

Alaska is home to the second largest earthquake ever recorded in history—the 1964 Great Alaskan Good Friday earthquake, registering a magnitude of 9.2 on the Richter scale. It lasted almost 5 minutes, if you can imagine that. Then we had a huge tsunami that killed dozens and dozens of people.

Eleven percent of all of the world's recorded earthquakes are in Alaska. Three of the eight largest earthquakes the world has ever seen have been in Alaska, and 7 of the 10 largest earthquakes in the United States were in Alaska. One earthquake registering a magnitude of 7 to 8 on the Richter scale happens every year in Alaska, but they don't normally happen in big, populated areas. There have been six earthquakes registering a magnitude from 6 to 7 on the Richter scale, but, again, not near the major cities. Our State is so big that we have a lot of these, and nobody gets hurt.

Speaking of getting hurt, earthquakes of this size—a 7.0, even a 6.0, even a 5.0—when they are near population centers, normally, in other parts of the world, they do a lot of damage—and they certainly did a lot of damage in Alaska—but, unfortunately, they also take lives.

For example, last year in Indonesia, there was an earthquake registering 6.9

on the Richter scale that killed almost 500 people. It is not just in developing countries. In New Zealand in 2011, there was an earthquake registering 6.3 on the Richter scale that killed over 150 people.

As I said, we were fortunate that there were no deaths. So what is part of the reason for that? Given how many earthquakes we have had over the years, we have learned a lot. The first thing we learned is about building codes. Fortunately—again, thank God—we had no buildings collapse. We have a lot of structures—homes, businesses, schools—that have severe structural damage, but a collapsing building is where you get a lot of deaths. With strong, strict building codes, particularly after the 1964 earthquake, that helps to prevent that.

It is also people who are resilient, tough, and trained. I want to talk a little bit about this because I have no doubt this is why we had no fatalities.

The group I really want to do a shout-out to—and I am just so proud of them—are the students and the teachers who were there in the beginning of the morning. I went through some of the schools just in the last few days, such as Houston Middle School and the elementary school in Eagle River. These schools just look like someone had completely exploded them inside. Yet these kids—young men and women—acted calm, heroic, and, most importantly, they did what they have been trained to do.

In Alaska, because we have so many earthquakes, the kids go through earthquake training all the time. They duck and cover under their desks.

There is a video that has kind of gone viral because I know other kids in the country are looking at it. It is actually from Mr. Benice's class, right when it happened. He is a teacher at the Mears Middle School in Anchorage. The video was on because he was supposed to capture his lesson Friday morning. He is a grad student, and he had to film the class and what he was teaching for his studies.

What the video captured, instead, were the students who are trained to react in ways that it is remarkable how automatic it was. After they saw this in Alaska, one reporter called these kids in this classroom "a well-oiled machine."

What am I talking about? If you watch it, the kids are sitting in their class. The teacher is talking, and you see a little bit of shaking. Boom. Then, every kid, without being told, knew exactly what to do. They were under their desks. Then, you see a lot of shaking, and, then, you see debris starting to come down. If you are not under a desk, you could be seriously injured or even killed by some of what is coming from the ceiling or worse.

In Houston Middle School, when Senator MURKOWSKI and I were touring, there were cinder blocks that were broken and shot out from the ceiling and the wall in these classrooms. Students

are in there, but they were trained, and they were ducking and covering.

In the video from Mr. Benice's classroom, after the shaking was over—it was about a minute, which seems like an eternity when you are in it—a student can be heard asking: "Will they cancel school today?"

Mr. Benice replied: "Well, that is probably not the first thing we need to be worrying about right now."

Yesterday, a niece of one of my staff members here in DC said that the video of Mr. Benice's class was being shown in schools in Iowa, including her school, Prairie View Middle School, in Waukee, IA, because the teachers are telling their students: Hey, this why we train, and this is what you do when there is some kind of natural disaster.

Literally, I have no doubt that the training that happened in Alaska saved lives. I want to thank those kids, those students. I am so proud, and I really, really, want to thank the teachers of Anchorage and the Mat-Su Valley for doing this training for the kids, month after month and year after year. It obviously paid off.

In terms of the reaction that you see, this why, again, I think all of my constituents are the Alaskans of the Week.

The first responders, as they do in so many emergencies, our local heroes, reacted immediately. Civil engineers and city and State workers immediately checked on all of these highways and bridges and off-ramps, some of which collapsed, and essential infrastructure, such as hospitals. The Port of Anchorage has had all kinds of structural damage, which is very dangerous in terms of the supply chain for my entire State. The U.S. Geological Survey and NOAA—the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration—gave us real-time information about the earthquakes and, importantly, the potential tsunamis. There were tsunami warnings all over Alaska because of how worried we were, being next to the ocean, that that may have triggered a tsunami. Thankfully, that did not happen.

The State and local officials and the Anchorage Fire Department received hundreds of calls about damaged gas lines. We did have some house fires because of it. We did lose some houses because of it. Our utilities jumped into action. ENSTAR, which is a natural gas company, went to over 700 houses that had reported gas leaks. For the thousands who lost power, they got power back on in a relatively short time. This is very important because when it is 20 degrees in Alaska and we lose power in the winter, it is not as though we can borrow power from Illinois or Kentucky. We are there, alone and unafraid. We have to produce our own power. Yet our utility companies got power back on in my house in a few hours.

Ken Bearman worked for ENSTAR for 46 years before retirement on November 9. Guess what he did as a utility guy. He suited up and came back to

work on the job, to just go out and help people.

That is the other thing. Alaskans went door-to-door checking on their neighbors. Shelters were immediately opened. Hospitals prepared for what they thought were going to be massive injuries and potentially deaths. Churches and nonprofits were available. That is what Alaskans do. When you live out and alone in part of a State that is pretty remote and communities are remote, that is what you have to do.

The other group that kicked into gear—and I do want to thank my colleagues here—was the Federal Government. FEMA launched people almost immediately from the west coast, and we heard from senior Federal officials almost immediately. I want to commend the Trump administration and the rest of the Federal Government for their quick reaction. So many of them are in Alaska now.

Almost within an hour, the President of the United States, who was down in Argentina at the G20, tweeted:

To the great people of Alaska, you have been hit hard by the big one. Please follow the directions of the highly trained professionals who are there to help you. Your Federal Government will spare no expense. God bless you all.

That was from the President.

The Vice President, who was also traveling, called me and Senator MURKOWSKI within a few hours. The Chief of Staff of the White House, General Kelly, called. Every one of them wanted to know: What can we do? How can we help? Who do we need to send?

The Secretary of Transportation—I want to give a special shout-out to Elaine Chao. She has already checked in with me three different times, and they have people on their way up to help with major infrastructure damages. The same with our FEMA Administrator, who has been a busy man, let's face it. Brock Long did a conference call with me, Senator MURKOWSKI, and Congressman YOUNG.

I also want to thank my Senate colleagues. A lot of the press likes to report that we are always battling, that we are always fighting. I don't think that is true, by the way. It is absolutely not true. We have certain things on which we have principled differences, but a lot of action here is bipartisan, and the relationships matter. Within just a few hours, I had several of my colleagues, Democrats and Republicans, calling, texting, emailing: Hey, Dan, we heard about Alaska. We are seeing these images on TV. We got your back. We are praying for you. And that means a lot.

I was talking to Senator PAT LEAHY, the Senator from Vermont—a Democrat from Vermont—this morning about this very issue. He has seen a lot here in the Senate. He has been in the Senate for a long time—over four decades. Do you know what he said to me? It is important to remember that when these kinds of things happen, it reminds everybody in this body that we

are the United States of America—the United States of America. We take care of each other when we know bad things are happening in different parts of the country.

Kind of related again to this reaction, Senator MURKOWSKI and I had the opportunity to go out to the Incident Command Center. Yes, there are times when you don't feel like the different levels of government are working or coordinating. By the way, our first responders include our military, our National Guard, which does such a great job. This Incident Command Center would give any American pride because they were all there, almost like a battle, like a war, like an op center, for the military people watching. It was FEMA, it was Federal, it was the military, it was the State, and it was local, all working like this, literally working together, hand in glove.

So to my constituents, we are going to have a long road to recovery, there is no doubt about that, but people are already getting on it. There are going to be frustrations, and we have to work through those. I know people are still scared and nervous and wondering how they are going to pay for all the damage, but we are going to work through that together.

For my colleagues here in the Senate, you know, we have had a lot of natural disasters over the last few years—at least since I have been here in the Senate—throughout the country. There were hurricanes in Florida, Louisiana, and Houston, TX. California just went through horrendous wildfires that killed so many of our fellow Americans. This body acts. This body has acted with disaster relief funding.

I remember saying to a number of Senators here and to my constituents that when those big—some of those packages have been big in terms of the funding, in terms of the dollars. Colleagues said: Hey, Dan, we need your vote on this.

None of that money was going to Alaska, but I remember saying each time: You know, I am voting for these packages. Why? I think it is the right thing to do.

Also, let's face it, but for the grace of God go I and my State and my constituents. I live in a State where there are all kinds of natural disasters, such as wildfires, earthquakes, volcanoes, tsunamis. But I think that is the attitude here in general. When bad things happen—particularly natural disasters—to other parts of the country, the vast majority of this body says: Hey, I am going to help. I am going to help.

So I am already getting the sense that my colleagues here will make sure that help comes to Alaska as we continue to assess the damage.

I also want to just mention to the American people who are watching, including Alaskans or folks from the lower 48, Senator MURKOWSKI and Congressman YOUNG and I held a press conference on Friday afternoon after talking to the Federal Government, work-

ing closely with our State leaders, to give people information. It was a national press conference—actually national media coverage—so I took the opportunity—a lot of this was still going on, including aftershocks, and we didn't know. We didn't know if there were 200 people killed. So I asked people watching to pray for their fellow Americans up in Alaska.

As I mentioned, yes, we were prepared. Yes, the building codes in Alaska are probably some of the strongest on the planet. I am so proud of our students, who were trained by great teachers. Our first responders were out there in the cold within minutes, let alone others working, and are still doing it, by the way.

I have no doubt that part of the reason we had zero fatalities, zero deaths with a 7.0 earthquake in a city of almost 300,000 people—in most parts of the world, there would not be zero deaths; there would probably be thousands. I have no doubt that part of the reason is because of those prayers. So I want to thank anyone and everyone who was praying for Alaska that day because I guarantee you, it mattered.

To my fellow Alaskans, I again want to thank you. I think that on Friday and even continuing up to today, you represent the best of America, the best of what we as Americans love to see in our fellow Americans: resilience, toughness, preparedness, and helping each other. That was on display and has been on display, and I couldn't be prouder to represent the great State of Alaska, particularly now.

We have a lot of work to do. There are going to be frustrations. It is going to take time. But be assured that we will be working here and at home—Senator MURKOWSKI and I but also with our colleagues—to make our recovery from this massive earthquake as speedy as possible.

God bless.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. YOUNG). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

## EXECUTIVE SESSION

### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of the following nomination: Executive Calendar No. 1200.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination as follows:

The following named officer for appointment in the United States Navy to the grade

indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., section 601 to be Vice Admiral: Vice Admiral James J. Malloy.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nomination.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate vote on the nomination with no intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; that no further motions be in order; and that any statements relating to the nomination be printed in the RECORD.

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

There being no further debate, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Malloy nomination?

The nomination was confirmed.

## LEGISLATIVE SESSION

### MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

### REMEMBERING JACK MACKENZIE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, on November 28, Quincy, IL, lost a legend in Coach John "Jack" Butler Mackenzie at the age of 77. Jack was the architect of an amazing soccer program at Quincy University. He led the Franciscan school's soccer program to nine National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics, NAIA, National Championships and 516 victories, making him the tenth all-time in NCAA history for wins, regardless of division. He did all of this while setting examples as a coach, a father, grandfather, and leader.

Jack was born on February 26, 1941, to John "Scottie" and Mary Jane Mackenzie. He attended McBride High School in 1959 and earned a scholarship to play football at the University of Missouri. After a year, Jack left to attend Washington University in St. Louis, earning both a bachelor's degree in physical education and a master's in education.

Jack married his high school sweetheart, Sharon Bechtold, in June of 1962. He enjoyed telling people that he fell in love with her in sixth grade. Jack worked at Augustinian Academy in St. Louis and was on the cusp of making a big decision.

In 1969, at the urging of his best friend, Frank Longo, who introduced soccer to Quincy, Jack moved from St. Louis to run the Quincy University soccer program. QU had already won