

When I asked her about the strong ideological perspectives reflected in her writings and public statements, she claimed that she “come[s] here to this committee with no agenda and no ideology and [she] would strive, if [she] were confirmed, to follow the law in every case.”

Ms. Rao would have us ignore all of her controversial statements and positions and simply trust her blanket assertion that she has no agenda or ideology. In this, she is like the other Trump judicial nominees.

As a college student, Ms. Rao criticized environmental student groups for focusing on “three major environmental boogymen, the greenhouse effect, the depleting ozone layer, and the dangers of acid rain . . . though all three theories have come under serious scientific attack.”

More than two decades later, Ms. Rao demonstrated the same disregard for environmental concerns as the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, OIRA. In this position she has consistently used her power and influence to strip away critical protections for clean air and clean water. For example, Ms. Rao supported efforts to replace the Clean Power Plan, which would have reduced greenhouse gas emissions with a rule that would actually increase air pollution and could lead to up to 1,400 additional premature deaths.

Her claim that she would simply follow precedent is also contradicted by her statements and positions relating to racial injustice. In her twenties, while discussing the Yale Women’s Center and what she called “cultural awareness groups,” she argued that “[m]yths of sexual and racial oppression propagate [sic] themselves, create hysteria and finally lead to the formation of some whining new group.”

I just wonder, what are these whining new groups that she refers to? Could it be women who want to support programs that support women?

In 2015, as a law professor, she disparagingly described the Supreme Court case that reaffirmed the Fair Housing Act’s protections against disparate impact discrimination as a “rul[ing] by talking points,” not law.

In Texas Department of Housing v. Inclusive Communities Project, the Supreme Court recognized that the disparate impact doctrine is an important way “to counteract unconscious prejudices and disguised animus” based on a policy’s discriminatory effects. Despite the Supreme Court precedent, when Ms. Rao became the OIRA Administrator, she began working to weaken rules protecting against disparate impact discrimination—upheld by the Supreme Court, by the way—particularly in the area of housing.

Her writings and actions related to sexual assault and rape are another reason we should be hesitant to believe her claim that she will merely follow the law free of her strongly held ideological views. In her twenties, Ms. Rao

repeatedly wrote offensive statements about date rape and sexual assault that disparaged survivors. In writing about date rape, she argued that if a woman “drinks to the point where she can no longer choose, well, getting to that point was part of her choice.”

In criticizing the feminist movement, she asserted she was “not arguing that date rape victims ask for it” but then argued that “when playing the modern dating game, women have to understand and accept the consequences of their sexuality.”

At her hearing and in a subsequent letter to this Committee, Ms. Rao tried to walk away from these offensive writings, stating that she “regret[s]” some of them and believes “[v]ictims should not be blamed.” But at the hearing she continued to insist that her prior controversial statements were “only trying to make the commonsense observation about the relationship between drinking and becoming a victim.” That is not how her statements came across.

She seems to acknowledge that by further claiming that if she were addressing campus sexual assault and rape now, she “would have more empathy and perspective.” That claim rings hollow, as she only recently oversaw the Trump administration’s proposed title IX rule that would make it harder for college sexual assault survivors to come forward and obtain justice.

Among other things, the proposed rule would require schools to conduct a live hearing where the accused’s representatives can cross-examine the survivor. It would also have the school use a higher burden of proof for sexual misconduct cases than for other misconduct cases.

I will close by noting that Ms. Rao previously criticized the Senate Judiciary Committee’s confirmation hearings for judicial nominees. In writing about the Supreme Court confirmation process, she complained that nominees are “coached to choose from certain stock answers,” such as “repeatedly alleg[ing] fidelity to the law.”

Back then she readily acknowledged that “judges draw on a variety of tools in interpreting the law, and that these tools differ for judges based on their constitutional values.” But now that she has been nominated to become a judge, she is the one giving the Judiciary Committee the formulaic “stock answers” that she criticized.

Before she became a judicial nominee, she indicated that nominees should not be confirmed “based on incantations of the right formulas without an examination of their actual beliefs.” We should hold her to her own words.

An examination of Ms. Rao’s record and actual beliefs show that the controversial views she held in her twenties are not so different from her statements and actions as a legal professional. That is why I will be voting against Ms. Rao’s nomination, and I strongly urge my colleagues to do the same.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

THE GREEN NEW DEAL

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, desperate to distract from the \$93 trillion price tag of their so-called Green New Deal, the Democratic leadership here in the Senate has been coming down to the floor to claim that Republicans are ignoring climate change.

On February 14, the Democratic leader came to the floor and said: “Since Republicans took control of this Chamber in 2015, they have not brought a single Republican bill to meaningfully reduce carbon emissions to the floor of the Senate. Not one bill.” That is a quote from the Democratic leader just a month ago.

That would be news to me, and I think it would be news to some Democratic Senators here, as well. On January 14 of this year, for example, the President signed into law the Nuclear Energy Innovation and Modernization Act. That legislation, led by Republican Senator BARRASSO and cosponsored by both Republicans and Democrats, paves the way for new advanced nuclear technologies, which will help further reduce carbon emissions.

Here is what the Democratic ranking member of the Environment and Public Works Committee had to say about this bill:

Nuclear power serves as our nation’s largest source of reliable, carbon-free energy, which can help combat the negative impacts of climate change and at the same time, foster economic opportunities for Americans. . . . This is another important step in our fight against climate change.

That is from the Democratic ranking member of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee. Let me repeat that. “This is another important step in our fight against climate change.” That is coming from a key Democrat on a key committee that deals with this issue. That is not a Republican talking; that is the Democratic ranking member of the Environment and Public Works Committee.

Then, of course, there is the Furthering Carbon Capture, Utilization, Technology, Underground Storage, and Reduced Emissions Act. Granted, that is a fairly long title. Several Republicans are original cosponsors of that. It became law as part of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018. The FUTURE Act, as it is referred to, extends and expands tax credits for facilities with carbon capture, utilization, and sequestration technologies, which are referred to as CCUS technologies.

Here is what the Clean Air Task Force had to say about this legislation:

[T]he U.S. Congress took a landmark step by passing one of the most important bills for reducing global warming pollution in the last two decades.

That is a quote from the Clean Air Task Force and what they had to say about that legislation.

Then there is the Nuclear Energy Innovation Capabilities Act, led by Republican Senator MIKE CRAPO, which

became law in September. This legislation will help support the development of advanced nuclear reactor designs, which will increase America's supply of clean and reliable energy.

Here is what the junior Democratic Senator from Rhode Island had to say about this legislation:

Partnerships between the private sector and our world-class scientists at national labs will help bring new technologies forward to compete against polluting forms of energy. . . . I am proud to have worked with Senator CRAPO to get this bipartisan energy legislation over the finish line.

Here is what the junior Democratic Senator from New Jersey had to say:

Reducing our carbon emissions as quickly as possible requires prioritizing the development and commercialization of advanced nuclear reactors, which will be even safer and more efficient than current reactors. Passage of this legislation will provide critical support to startup companies here in the United States that are investing billions of dollars in these next generation reactor designs.

Here is what the Democratic whip himself had to say:

I was proud to join Senator CRAPO on this bipartisan bill.

I could go on. I could talk about the 2018 farm bill, which, in the words of Earth Justice, contains "a number of provisions that incentivize more climate-friendly practices." I serve on that committee. I was involved in the conservation title and the drafting of that, including a number of provisions in there. I could talk about the provision in the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 to ensure the completion of our first two new nuclear reactors in a generation, which will prevent 10 million tons of carbon dioxide emissions annually; or the extension of wind and solar clean energy tax credits; or the bipartisan America's Water Infrastructure Act, which will help advance hydropower projects—a significant source of emission-free energy.

Suffice it to say that Republican Senators have passed more than one bill to protect our environment and help America achieve a clean energy future, and we are not stopping here. So why all the misdirection on the part of the Democrats? I am sure Democrats think it is politically advantageous to portray themselves as the only party that is invested in clean energy.

Then, of course, Democrats are desperate to distract from the details of the \$93 trillion Green New Deal that their Presidential candidates have embraced. That is right—I said \$93 trillion. One think tank has released the first estimate of what the Green New Deal will cost, and the answer is between \$51 trillion and \$93 trillion over 10 years. That is an incomprehensible amount of money.

For comparison, the entire Federal budget for 2019 is less than \$5 trillion. The 2017 gross domestic product for the entire world, the entire planet, came to \$80.7 trillion—more than \$10 trillion less than Democrats are proposing to spend on the Green New Deal. Ninety-

three trillion dollars is more than the amount of money the U.S. Government has spent in its entire history. Since 1789, when the Constitution went into effect, the Federal Government has spent a total of \$83.2 trillion. That is right—it has taken us 230 years to spend the amount of money Democrats want to spend in 10.

Even attempting to pay for the Green New Deal would devastate working families, who would be hit with incredibly high new taxes. Let's be very clear about this. This is not a plan that can be paid for by taxing the rich. Taxing every family making more than \$200,000 a year at a 100-percent tax rate for 10 years wouldn't get Democrats anywhere close to \$93 trillion. Taxing every family making more than \$100,000 a year at a 100-percent tax rate for 10 years would still leave Democrats short of \$93 trillion.

Of course, the amount of money we are talking about, as horrifying as it is, is just one negative aspect of the Green New Deal. Democrats' Green New Deal is a full-blown socialist fantasy that would put the government in charge of not just energy but healthcare and all the other various aspects of the American economy.

One of the Green New Deal's authors posted and then deleted a document from her website noting that the Green New Deal would provide economic security for those unable or unwilling to work. That is right—in the Democrats' socialist fantasies, apparently the government will provide you with economic security if you are unwilling to work. Let's hope there are enough willing workers to fund those who are unwilling to work. After all, that \$93 trillion has to come from somewhere.

It is no wonder that Democrats are trying to change the subject when it comes to the Green New Deal. They don't want to have to defend the specifics of their plan because their plan is, frankly, indefensible.

If the Democrats would like to have a serious discussion about energy, they should repudiate the unfathomably expensive Green New Deal and join Republicans in focusing on ways to secure a clean energy future without devastating the economy or bankrupting working families.

Mr. President, 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. BURR. 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 CHRISTIAN COOK

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I rise to recognize a gentleman by the name of Christian Cook.

Christian Cook has been a vital member of the staff on the Senate's Select Committee on Intelligence for the last 8 years and has been my personal des-

ignee on the committee for the majority of that time. Throughout Christian's career, he has continuously put his country above himself and has been tirelessly dedicated to achieving excellence in all areas of his work across the national security spectrum.

His passion to serve first led him to become a special agent for the U.S. Secret Service, where he expertly conducted investigations of violations of Federal criminal law and threats against the President and Vice President. He worked diligently to ensure that the safety and security of the President, the Vice President, and numerous foreign heads of state were without question. Christian also served a pivotal role in the design, preparation and execution of the security plan for the 2005 Presidential Inaugural Parade. Christian's focus on supporting national security efforts continued when he transitioned to the private sector.

While working with Booz Allen Hamilton, he skillfully developed time-sensitive and complex tactical solutions for classified U.S. intelligence clients. With The Cohen Group, Christian provided strategic insights that enabled key clients to meet their evolving global security needs. At the USIS, he also seamlessly managed complex, classified programs for the U.S. intelligence community and for Federal law enforcement Agencies, substantially strengthening their counterterrorism capabilities.

Christian subsequently joined the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. It is hard to know where to start to list his many accomplishments. In the last 8 years, he has done everything, and he has done it all to his own exceedingly high standards. He initially served with the audits team and was intricately involved in the committee's oversight of the U.S. intelligence community's 17 intelligence Agencies. By conducting thorough reviews of specific intelligence programs, his expert knowledge and deep insight enabled the committee to identify items of concern and outline proposals for their improvement.

It quickly became clear to me that Christian had an unsurpassed capability to conduct intelligence oversight but also a unique ability to analyze complex challenges and identify solutions. At that time, I personally selected him to be my designee on the committee. As my designee, he expertly analyzed and advised me on the myriad of threats across the intelligence landscape.

He also flawlessly facilitated the development, passage, and implementation of critical intelligence-related legislation in this body.

Several of Christian's colleagues have had the privilege to work with him for years. When asked what words best describe Christian, numerous clear themes resound, such as dedication, his passion for our Nation and its security,