

a one-size-fits-all program, and it would reduce the local cost share required by half.

I am eager to hear from my constituents in El Paso and Laredo and to talk about what else we can do in Washington to promote college and career readiness. In a tight labor market with a booming economy, one of the things we hear about the most back home is the fact that employers can't find adequately trained workers for the jobs that are available and return a good wage. So it is important that we continue to do everything we can not only to promote education generally but also to promote career readiness for many of the well-paying jobs that are going wanting for the lack of qualified workers.

JENNA QUINN LAW

Madam President, I will also take some time to visit the Center for Child Protection in Austin to discuss the Jenna Quinn Law. This would authorize grants for training students, teachers, and caregivers on identifying and reporting child sexual abuse. The bill is named for a courageous Texan and is modeled after successful reforms in my State. It is another great example of how we are working to bring the successful Texas model to the national level.

B-21 STRATEGIC BOMBER

Madam President, finally, I will visit Dyess Air Force Base in Abilene, TX, with my friend and colleague, Congressman JODEY ARRINGTON, for a briefing on its latest operations and the recent news from the Air Force that Dyess will be receiving the B-21—the next generation of strategic bombers.

Dyess is the most dynamic bomber base in the country, and I am glad the Air Force has chosen the future home for the B-21 squadrons as well as weapons instruction courses and test squadrons. It just makes a lot of sense.

I look forward to spending time at home with my constituents. These conversations drive my work in the Senate, and I am eager to get more feedback on how these bills could make positive changes in their lives and in the lives of all of my constituents in the State.

REMEMBERING LIEUTENANT COLONEL RICHARD COLE

Madam President, on one final matter, this week, Texas lost a true hero. Lt. Col. Richard Cole passed away on Tuesday at the ripe old age of 103 in my hometown of San Antonio.

For Texans and for so many Americans, Lieutenant Colonel Cole—or “Dick” as his friends and brothers in arms called him—symbolized one of the most remarkable groups from the greatest generation in World War II—the Doolittle Raiders. The group is named for then-Lt. Col. Jimmy Doolittle, who, in April of 1942, fearlessly led 16 B-25 bombers and 80 crew members on a strike that targeted factories and military installations in and around Tokyo. This was actually

Dick's first mission, and he was Jimmy Doolittle's copilot.

After the attack by the Japanese on Pearl Harbor, this mission was not just of tactical importance—it was a major morale boost for our Nation.

Air Force Chief of Staff David Goldfein recently said:

Those 80 intrepid airmen changed the course of history. They executed a one-way mission without hesitation and against enormous odds.

The mission was, as you might imagine, perilous. Doolittle's Raiders took off from the USS *Hornet* with barely enough runway to get airborne. In fact, Doolittle and Cole's aircraft only had 467 feet with which to take off in an aircraft that was not designed to launch from an aircraft carrier. The airplanes inadvertently took off 170 miles further from Japan than they had planned, so they had insufficient fuel to make it to their landing fields in China.

As a result, Dick—then 26 and having had limited experience in jumping out of an aircraft—had to leap out of his B-25 into unknown territory. He later reported that he gave himself a black eye when he pulled the ripcord and finally landed in the branches of a tree, where he spent the night, dangling.

He later said:

They don't give a Purple Heart for self-inflicted injuries. I gave myself a black eye.

Yet his heroism was certainly rewarded. He received the Distinguished Flying Cross for his role in the bombing as well as the Bronze Star and the Air Medal. Then, in 2015, Dick and his fellow Raiders received the Congressional Gold Medal.

These men, as you might imagine, shared an incredible bond, and their lasting camaraderie was evident through one special tradition they shared. At each reunion, the crew would share a cognac in silver goblets. Each goblet was engraved with a Raider's name both right-side up and right-side down. After toasting to the men who had died since their last reunion, they would flip over the goblets of those who had passed away.

At their final reunion in 2013, only four Raiders were left. After determining that this would be the final reunion due to their ages and travel limitations, Dick delivered the last toast. Now his silver goblet will be turned over just as it was for the 79 brothers who left this Earth before him.

We remember the final Doolittle Raider today for his incredible courage and sacrifice and a life well lived. America has lost another hero, but our country will never forget him.

I send my condolences to Dick's family and friends and especially to Rich, his son, and to Cindy, his daughter.

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. MARKEY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

NOMINATION OF DAVID BERNHARDT

Mr. MARKEY. Madam President, I rise today to address the Senate on the nomination of David Bernhardt to head the Department of the Interior.

I ask unanimous consent that I may use this chart in order to further my goal of making it clear why he should not be nominated and confirmed as Secretary of the Interior.

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

Mr. MARKEY. Madam President, under Secretary Bernhardt, the Department of the Interior will come to stand for the Department of Oil Interests, DOI.

This wheel of Bernhardt's giveaways makes it very clear what the objective of his tenure as the Secretary of Interior will, in fact, entail.

Bernhardt's nomination is just a continuation of the Trump administration's cartel Cabinet. Only a month ago, a former coal lobbyist was confirmed to head the Environmental Protection Agency. Let me say that again. Just last month, a coal lobbyist was nominated and confirmed to be the head of the Environmental Protection Agency of the United States—unbelievable. But now Republicans want to install a former oil lobbyist to head the Department of the Interior because, in Trump's administration, it is nothing but foxes guarding the henhouse.

We need more answers about Mr. Bernhardt's lobbying activities. We need answers on whether Mr. Bernhardt used his position at the Department of the Interior to help former clients. The American people need to see the documents associated with Bernhardt's lobbying activities. Most importantly, we should not confirm a former oil lobbyist to lead the very Agency that is tasked with protecting our public lands from despoliation.

Let me now point to the wheel of giveaways for more oil—more oil. And that is the goal of his appointment.

The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is one of our national treasures that is under threat from Big Oil and the Trump administration. This is the wildest place left in America, and it should not be turned into a drilling playground. Yet Republicans here in the Senate voted in 2017 to hand this special place—the Arctic Refuge—over to Big Oil. Now this administration is trying to hit the gas on drilling there, in one of the Earth's most pristine wilderness areas.

Last year, Mr. Bernhardt said that he would “expedite” oil development in the wildlife refuge, and he has worked inside the Department of the Interior to limit environmental review of drilling activities. So let's just imagine gushing oil poisoning the habitat of magnificent creatures like polar bears and caribou, snowy owls and the Arctic fox; rigs and pumps threatening the ancestral homeland of the Gwich'in and Inupiat peoples, which they call “the sacred place where life begins.”

I have spent my career protecting the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge for future generations, and today I will not support the nomination of David Bernhardt to undermine the protections we have worked so hard to put in place. We must stand up for the generations yet to come that cannot yet speak to protect our public lands and our oceans.

At the same time, the Trump administration is trying to roll back the fuel economy standards for the vehicles we drive. In other words, since we put 70 percent of all the oil we consume in our country on a yearly basis into the gasoline tanks of the vehicles we drive in our country, if you increase the fuel economy of every one of those vehicles, it will reduce the amount of oil you need to drill for.

What do the Republicans want to do? What do the oil companies want? What do the Koch brothers want? What does ExxonMobil want? Well, it is very simple. By not increasing the fuel economy standards of the vehicles we drive, we need more oil because cars will consume more in the course of a year. They then say: Ah, let's turn to the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge—a sacred place—and find more oil, because the vehicles we drive won't be that efficient.

What kind of sacrifice are we going to make in our country because the Koch brothers and ExxonMobil want to have more oil drilled for? We are going to have the Trump administration say: The only way we can justify it is if the cars, the light trucks, the SUVs that people drive are not that efficient; therefore, we need all the oil we can get, even though we are a technical giant and we know we can make these vehicles so much more efficient, so we never have to drill there. That is a sin against the environment and a sin against our country and future generations that should be able to enjoy this pristine area, the wildlife refuge.

Let's move on to another part of the wheel of giveaways—even more oil that will be another giveaway during the Bernhardt time at the Department of the Interior.

On January 4, 2018, the Department of the Interior announced a plan to revise the offshore drilling plan to eliminate protections for the east and west coasts, the eastern Gulf of Mexico, and the Arctic Ocean. The plan proposed to open up more than 90 percent of the U.S. coastlines to oil and gas leasing.

Since then, the bipartisan opposition has been deafening. All Governors along the east and west coasts have opposed or expressed concerns about expanded oil and gas exploration off their coasts. More than 340 municipalities and over 2,100 elected local, State, and Federal officials have formally opposed offshore oil and gas drilling and seismic airgun blasting in our ocean. But David Bernhardt is not listening to those concerns. Instead, he is listening to his former fossil fuel clients. He is moving ahead with this terrible off-

shore drilling plan that would threaten State after State with the threat of a spill in the ocean off of those States.

We should not confirm Bernhardt to lead the Department of the Interior. Handing the keys to the beaches of our country, the coastlines of our country, and our fishing and tourism industries in our country over to Big Oil is not what our citizens want. That is the opposite of what we need to do to protect our environment, but that is what David Bernhardt and his fossil fuel friends want.

There is no reason that we have to drill off of the coastlines of our country right where people who are swimming will be watching these oil rigs that are going to be drilling down into those ocean areas off of our beaches to find oil that we don't need. If we increase the fuel economy standards of the vehicles we drive, we will be able to back out the need for all of that additional oil. That is the sin against the environment that is being committed. That is the agenda of David Bernhardt's at the Department of the Interior.

Instead of being the United States of America—a technological giant that invents its way to the new automotive technologies that reduce the amount of oil we need and reduces the amount of greenhouse gasses that go up into the atmosphere—with David Bernhardt as the Secretary of the Interior, partnered with the new coal lobbyist who is running the EPA, we are going to wind up with more greenhouse gasses going up into the air, a reduction in the efficiency of the vehicles we drive, and putting more profits into the pockets of the Koch brothers and ExxonMobil and the auto industry, which also wants to reduce the fuel economy standards of the vehicles we drive. This is a sin against our environment but also our identity as the technological giant of the planet.

We can do this. We can make our cars more efficient. We can have plug-in hybrids. We can have all-electric vehicles. We can create a revolution that avoids the necessity of drilling off of our beaches and drilling in the Arctic Wildlife Refuge. We can do this, but that is not what Donald Trump wants. He wants fossil fuel industry representatives at the Department of the Interior and EPA running these Agencies.

David Bernhardt's ties to Big Oil—the very industry he is tasked with regulating—are as deep as an oil well. Those ties should be disqualifying for anyone nominated to head the Department of the Interior. We need to stop the pollution of our democracy by Big Oil interests.

I urge my colleagues to vote no on the nomination of David Bernhardt. I ask my colleagues to consider what we can do to avoid the necessity of despoiling these sacred environmental locations in our country for the oil industry, for the Koch brothers.

This is a big moment, this vote we are about to cast. This is one more step

by Donald Trump that will result in far more greenhouse gases going up into the atmosphere, far more danger being presented to places that should be put off limits to the oil industry because of the risk of environmental danger that would result from that permission to drill.

That is why we should all pause and really consider whether we want to go deeper and deeper into an era that is completely avoidable if we unleash the technological might of our country.

When President Kennedy went to Rice University in 1961, what he said was that we were going to have a mission to the Moon and that mission would require us to invent new metals, new alloys, new propulsion systems that did not exist, and that within 10 years, we would have to then bring that mission back safely from the Moon through heat half the intensity of the Sun and do so successfully.

Auto mechanics is not rocket science. We already know how to improve the fuel economy standards of the vehicles we drive. We don't need nuclear physics and we don't need aeronautical engineers to help us do this.

President Kennedy challenged our country, and we responded. President Trump is like J.F.K. in reverse. He is saying that we can't do it; that, instead, what we have to do is, here on Earth, be the leaders in spoiling our most sacred environmental locations.

That is why today is such a monumental opportunity for the Senate to say no on a bipartisan basis to David Bernhardt, who is someone who does not deserve the post of Secretary of the Interior.

I once again urge a “no” vote from all of my colleagues.

I yield the floor.

Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

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

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

NOMINATION OF DAVID BERNHARDT

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, I am pleased to be here today to speak in strong support of David Bernhardt's nomination to be Secretary of the Interior, and I thank all of my colleagues on the Energy and Natural Resources Committee. We worked pretty hard together to report Mr. Bernhardt's nomination last week. We moved it out with good bipartisan support. I also thank the majority leader for filing cloture this week so that we can confirm him before we depart for this 2-week work period.

I have several reasons—I have a whole host of different reasons to outline as to why I support Mr. Bernhardt's nomination. I outlined them