

Kennedy	Portman	Shelby
Lankford	Risch	Sullivan
Lee	Roberts	Thune
McConnell	Romney	Tillis
McSally	Rounds	Toomey
Moran	Rubio	Wicker
Murkowski	Sasse	Young
Paul	Scott (FL)	
Perdue	Scott (SC)	

NAYS—46

Baldwin	Heinrich	Sanders
Bennet	Hirono	Schatz
Blumenthal	Jones	Schumer
Booker	Kaine	Shaheen
Brown	King	Sinema
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Smith
Cardin	Leahy	Stabenow
Carper	Manchin	Tester
Casey	Markey	Udall
Coons	Menendez	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Warner
Duckworth	Murphy	Warren
Durbin	Murray	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Peters	Wyden
Gillibrand	Reed	
Hassan	Rosen	

NOT VOTING—2

Capito Harris

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 52, the nays are 46.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of J. Campbell Barker, of Texas, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Texas.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. CASSIDY. Madam President, I am joined on the floor by my colleague Senator SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, who has recently visited coastal Louisiana and will share his observations following my remarks. He will speak objectively about that which we in Louisiana see not only objectively but emotionally.

We see our coastline melting away, and with the loss of that coastline, increasing vulnerability to hurricanes coming off the gulf, as well as a loss of villages, beautiful oak trees as salinity kills their roots, whole communities, and ways of life. I shall elaborate because Louisiana's coastal erosion impacts local businesses, communities, and I would say even our entire Nation.

Some of the Nation's most important trade, energy, and commercial fishing assets are associated with South Louisiana. Now, every Senator gets up and is proud of his or her State, and they will make statements such as that, but these statements are objectively true.

By tonnage, 5 of the 25 largest ports in the country are located in South Louisiana and along the Mississippi River. Twenty percent of the Nation's waterborne commerce moves through Louisiana. Approximately, 11,000 vessels use the lower Mississippi annually. If you think of a map of our country, from Wyoming to Pennsylvania, that is the territory of our country drained by the Mississippi and its tributaries. If you are shipping goods from Ohio to South America, most likely you are sending it down the Mississippi. The

prosperity of the farmer along the Missouri River can depend upon the navigation of the lower Mississippi. It is truly a nation-impacting resource, but coastal erosion threatens the flow of commerce that is essential and vital to all of these areas.

Approximately, 20 percent of the Nation's oil supply originates off the coast of Louisiana, and countless oil-field service companies are located in South Louisiana to process that energy. Companies like Cheniere, Tellurian, Sempra, and others are investing billions in liquefied natural gas facilities, demonstrating the value of the United States but of Louisiana, in particular, in the global LNG market.

By the way, the workers who work in these rigs or work in these industries may live in Louisiana, but sometimes they will live far inland. I saw a map where somebody commuted from Montana, coming down by airplane, working for a month, and then going back to Montana. So the folks who work in our energy industry may come from any part of our country. Coastal erosion puts this energy infrastructure in jeopardy, threatening our Nation's energy security.

Louisiana has the largest commercial fishing industry in the lower 48, harvesting and selling shrimp, crawfish, crabs, and oysters to restaurants and grocery stores around the country. Coastal erosion puts this industry and the livelihoods of the workers who depend upon it in jeopardy.

For these reasons, among many more, I fight in Congress to protect the Louisiana coastline. Senator WHITEHOUSE frequently has a floor chart when speaking on the environmental issues and says: "Time to wake up." Everyone in Louisiana is very awakened to this crisis.

Our State has developed its Coastal Master Plan to help restore and maintain our coast. I think Senator WHITEHOUSE will refer to that. We may not be able to save every parcel of land, but it is imperative that we work to protect the vulnerable marshland, as we can, and, in turn, the businesses and communities from the effects that we see today.

By the way, oftentimes we only hear about industry and environmental organizations attacking one another, but in Louisiana, we found that without one, the other cannot survive. We have found that the environmentalists and the energy industry have a way to co-exist and to work for the betterment of the other. One example is that the State receives revenues from offshore energy production and other grant programs to protect and restore our coastline. Louisiana's constitution mandates that these dollars go to coastal restoration, creating a unique partnership where the royalty payments from the energy industry fund the environmental restoration upon which my State's future depends.

Projects funded with this revenue include the Mid-Barataria and Mid-Bret-

on diversion projects, designed to direct more sediment from the Mississippi River to rebuild marshland lost due to coastal erosion, in part because the Mississippi River was previously leveed. Other projects seek to protect vulnerable marshland from further losses by controlling saltwater intrusion in the Houma Navigation Canal or the Calcasieu River ship channel. However, more needs to be done to protect Louisiana's coastline and the impact upon the United States' economic and energy security.

In a previous Congress, I introduced legislation in the House and now in the Senate to amend the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act to provide more offshore energy revenue to energy-producing States in the gulf to fund coastal restoration and other environmental protection projects. Most recently, in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act bill and in another bill, there was an increase to the current cap on GOMESA dollars for fiscal years 2020 and 2021. I am currently working on another version of revenue-sharing legislation for the Gulf States, which I plan to introduce later this spring.

As part of that effort, working with Senator WHITEHOUSE's staff, we have been working on legislation to create a revenue-sharing program with the Federal and State governments for offshore wind to fund coastal resiliency efforts, an issue important to us and probably about 80 percent of America's population that I roughly judge lives within 100 miles of the coastline.

I look forward to working with Senator WHITEHOUSE and other colleagues to ensure that the coastal restoration needs important to Louisiana and to the United States are met. Again, I so appreciate Senator WHITEHOUSE's coming to visit and learn more about coastal Louisiana. I look forward to working with him on our mutual interests to protect our environment and our communities.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, I am very grateful to be joined by the senior Senator from Louisiana on the floor today. I think this is about 240 in my series of "Time to Wake Up" speeches, and this is the first time we have a bipartisan presentation on the floor, which is significant to me.

I had the great pleasure of visiting Louisiana last month to see firsthand how a combination of decreased sedimentation, erosion, subsidence, habitat degradation, and rising seas are threatening Louisiana's coastline. I was joined by Congressman GARRET GRAVES, former Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority chairman, and I thank the Congressman for sharing his time and expertise of Louisiana's coastal issues. I have also enjoyed working with Louisiana's junior Senator on coastal resiliency efforts, and I look forward to continuing that work.

Senator CASSIDY and I share home States that are lively, diverse, coastal, proud, and a little bit eccentric and that have great food. There is a lot in common between Louisiana and Rhode Island. Like Rhode Island, Louisiana's coast drives the State's economy and has shaped the State's history and culture. Coastal Louisiana is home to around 2 million people and is responsible for over a quarter of the continental United States' fisheries landings. According to the U.S. Geological Survey, Louisiana's wetlands today represent about 40 percent of the wetlands of the continental United States and about 80 percent of the losses.

Coastal wetlands are critical habitat and nurseries for commercially important fisheries and other wildlife. They also improve coastal water quality and buffer against storm surge, flooding, and other storm effects. Across the United States, we have lost ground. About half of our original wetlands in the past 200 years are gone. That is significant, and the scale and speed of wetland loss in coastal Louisiana is almost impossible to comprehend. From 1932 until 2010, the State lost nearly 1,900 square miles, or 25 percent, of its coastal land. All the red is land lost from 1932 to 2010. Between 1985 and 2010, the State was losing ground, about a football field's worth, every hour. Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Gustav, and Ike caused the loss of more than 300 square miles of wetlands.

I saw firsthand what Louisiana's shredded coastline looks like from the air. The Mississippi River is one of the most heavily managed rivers in the world and is certainly one of the most important rivers in the world. A combination of flood prevention and irrigation interventions upriver have cut off the tap of sediment that used to flow naturally to Louisiana's wetlands. Now erosion outpaces natural rebuilding.

Though erosion is a natural phenomenon, oil and gas development exacerbates the problem. The dredged tracks left in the marsh by exploration and pipelines accelerate erosion, and here you see photos we took from our little airplane of some of those dredged channels. Strong storms, ratcheting up in strength on warmer ocean waters, thanks to climate change, also take a heavy toll on these vulnerable marshes, and you can see how these have been just washed out by the sea down here as well, again, looking out from our little aircraft.

Thank you, by the way, to SouthWings for sharing their aircraft with us so we could fly and see this.

On top of sediment loss, the Louisiana coastline is also sinking at around one-third of an inch each year due to the natural movement of the Earth's surface, and oil and gas development probably accelerates that process.

Then, there is sea level rise. Louisiana's Coastal Planning and Restoration Authority estimates as much as 2.7 feet of sea level rise by 2050. Tulane

University researchers concluded that current sea level rise estimates for Louisiana are actually probably too conservative, as the tide gauges used to track sea level rise don't accurately account for the fact that coastal marshes are sinking at the same time. So these current sea level rise projections don't fully express what the relative sea level rise is expected to be.

Following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, Louisiana undertook the daunting task of assembling a Coastal Master Plan. This 50-year, \$50 billion plan identifies 124 projects aimed at maintaining 800 square miles of land over time. Experts there hope to reduce over \$150 billion in damage by 2067 through a combination of hard infrastructure, restoring shoreline and barrier islands, diverting sediment, and protecting structures by doing things like flood-proofing and elevating them.

The Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority, which led the development of this master plan, looked at three potential scenarios for the next 50 years. It considered changes in precipitation, sea level rise, subsidence, and storm frequency and intensity.

We will look at the medium scenario. Under the medium scenario, the Coastal Authority expects more precipitation, over 2 feet of sea level rise, stronger though less frequent storms, and a continued slowing of subsidence. The agency then modeled what the coastline would look like 50 years out under these medium conditions with and without this \$50 billion investment. Without the \$50 billion investment, all that is red is lost to the sea. With the investment, there is still a lot of red lost, but these green areas show areas that are saved, and if you live in one of these green areas, hunt in one of these green areas, and have a business in one of these green areas, it is pretty darn important to you to see that they are saved.

Louisiana is at a point of no return, where the forward march of sea level rise and stronger storms will continue to erode the State's shore. Although Louisianians are faced with this discouraging future, I was very impressed by the optimism of the Louisianians I met. I spoke with Governor John Bel Edwards, with CPRA Chairman Chip Kline, CPRA Director Bren Haase, and Deputy for Coastal Activities Megan Terrell and had dinner together with many of them and Senator CASSIDY to discuss implementation of this Coastal Master Plan.

The Governor, who has said that "climate change is real; I do not deny it," is committed to implementing the Coastal Master Plan. The price tag is hefty, but the potential losses to Louisiana are much greater. I also went to Baton Rouge and met with Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome. While I was there in Baton Rouge, the Mississippi was steadily climbing the levees that protect the city. These are the handrails for the steps down to the Mississippi River, and, as you can see,

it was high enough that it was not only over the steps but over the handrails.

By March 21 of this year, the number of days at or above flood stage in Baton Rouge was on track to set new records. The mayor pointed out that getting the help communities need to prepare for severe but unnamed storms can be difficult, which is why I so appreciate working with Senator CASSIDY on ways to improve our response to coastal resilience, both of ours being Coastal States.

Following the release of the fifth National Climate Assessment back in November, Mayor-President Broome said:

After the 1,000-year rain event of 2016 in my city, I have been paying close attention to credible projections for future events. . . . the combined impacts of sea level rise and storm surge in the southeast have the potential to cost up to \$60 billion each year in 2050 and up to \$99 billion in 2090; that level of impact cannot be dismissed or put off for the next generation to deal with.

Baton Rouge is home to Louisiana State University, the LSU Tigers, and the impressive Center for River Studies. This is the main room at the Center for River Studies. This is an enormous physical model of the Mississippi River through which actual water runs and through which they can put small, sort of simulated sediment to model sediment flow, and these projectors on the roof can project down onto the surface to show various models and to provide all this color. So that is actually like a flat movie screen with projectors on the surface, which is three-dimensional in the sense that they built a model of the Mississippi River through it. It is an amazing educational tool, and it lets researchers at LSU and at the Army Corps of Engineers and others better understand the sediment dynamics in the Mississippi River.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a terrific article by the legendary Louisiana Pulitzer prize-winning outdoor columnist Bob Marshall.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[Apr. 7, 2019]

OUR COAST ISN'T DISAPPEARING OR VANISHING; IT'S BEING VIOLENTLY DESTROYED  
(By Bob Marshall)

Today's tip for Louisiana's coastal survival: Ban the terms "vanishing" and "disappearing" from being used in connection with the words "Louisiana coast."

You see, in the world of addiction recovery, practitioners know words are important. Until the addict admits to having a problem, they will never find a cure.

For example, the abuser who says, "I just get a little high now and then" will never kick the habit until he says, "I am an addict."

So it has occurred to me one of the reasons for the inability of Louisiana residents and politicians to take some necessary steps to save what's left of our coast is that we've been taught to use gentle euphemisms for a major cause of our demise: We say our wetlands and coast have been "vanishing" or "disappearing."

Nothing could be further from the truth.

Those descriptions evoke a gentle passage, a slow, almost comforting process of fading into history. And the term “lost coast” is equally off target. It’s like saying we misplaced a treasured item, or it was taken by an act of God.

None of those gentle things caused 2,000 square miles of marsh, swamp and uplands to become open water since the 1930s.

They were destroyed. By us.

And anyone who has spent time on the wet side of our levees—or has driven across the wetlands on elevated roadways—could see it wasn’t a gentle act.

This was a brutal assault, a battery, a vicious mugging. We used machines to dig up and toss aside marshes and cypress tupelo swamps to turn more than 10,000 miles (at last count) of our coastal zone into canals for barges to float drilling rigs, to lay tens of thousands of miles of pipelines for oil and gas, and to carve out shipping channels to make it easier and faster for boats to assist in the destruction. This was no gentle, whispering vanishing act; it was a noisy, diesel-fumed mauling of a pristine ecosystem we claim to love.

It was as violent and ugly to our homeland as the way companies eviscerated Western desert landscapes to strip mine for copper, or the way others dynamited entire Appalachian mountaintops—throwing their waste into adjacent streams—to make it easiest to harvest coal profits.

No one in Nevada or West Virginia says those deserts and mountains “disappeared” or “vanished.” They admit they were willfully destroyed.

Our ongoing embrace of these misleading euphemisms for what we did hides an even uglier aspect of this disaster: our silence. In many ways, this has been the Kitty Genovese of environmental crimes—because most of us stood by and did nothing even as the crime was being committed in front of us, then just walked silently away. We chose not to get involved because we were told it could cost us money.

Yes, levees on the rivers presaged the crimes, but those were unavoidable if we intended to live here. And 36 to 60 percent of what was destroyed—the portion researchers tie to oil and gas work—might still be here today if we had chosen another way.

Maybe we didn’t truly understand the systemic damage we were doing until the 1960s. But even then—even when the crime reports came out and the perpetrators were identified—we chose to look the other way.

Worse, we have taught the rest of the nation to join us in that deception. Google “Louisiana coast and disappearing,” and you’ll get 3.1 million hits. We have been so successful in this dissembling that our denial is now repeated regularly by journalists. The latest example is an in-depth New Yorker piece entitled “Louisiana’s Disappearing Coast”—which gave one sentence to the impact of those 10,000 miles of canals.

Indeed, our penchant for avoiding responsibility for our self-destruction extends to other another crime against our landscape and our children’s futures. Many of our politicians and residents now are ignoring or denying the mugging of the atmosphere by the emissions many of us help produce, emissions that are pushing the sea level rise acceleration that will send us to even earlier watery grave.

The only way to kick this deadly habit is to finally admit we have a problem.

So, let’s take the first step. Let’s look in the mirror and say to the people we see staring back that our coast isn’t disappearing or vanishing. It has been, and continues to be, willfully destroyed by our inaction—and we have no future here unless we kick that habit.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, after Baton Rouge, I went to the legendary city of New Orleans where I met with Mayor LaToya Cantrell. Around half of that city lives below sea level. Strong partnerships between the public and private sectors help make the city a national leader in resiliency planning.

In 2017, the city’s “Climate Action for a Resilient New Orleans” plan pledged to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 50 percent by 2030. In March, New Orleans sued 11 oil, gas, and pipeline companies for damage to the wetlands that protect the city from storm surge and flooding.

Mayor Cantrell spoke to me about “learning to live with water” in the post-Katrina city. I visited community leaders in the recovering Lower Ninth Ward who are turning wetlands restoration projects in the area into education, community engagement, tourism, and other opportunities to rebuild a healthy connection between the city and the water that surrounds it.

I also met with a number of community leaders to discuss how businesses, nonprofits, researchers, and government agencies work together to save Louisiana’s working coastline. I heard from a business owner about a property he was having difficulty insuring due to anticipated flood risks.

I learned about the changes fishermen see in the gulf and how some of them have switched to nontraditional fisheries or changed careers completely. Hunters and recreational fishermen also notice worrying changes in their sportsmen’s paradise.

Though the evidence of climate change is everywhere in Louisiana and is reshaping the lives of Louisianans, the phrase “climate change” still brings apprehension in some circles.

Let me go back. This is us in the Ninth Ward, and here we are with some of the boats down at the fishing pier off of the Mississippi. I will describe a little bit more. This is the inlet that flows to Davis Pond, and it has brought water and sediment to the Davis Pond area.

You can’t see this very clearly, but these are white pelicans. I had never seen so many together in my life. It is rare for a Rhode Islander to see a white pelican. Here they pile in thick because the fish get drawn in coming off the river, and it makes a wonderful chow line. So there is a big population of white pelicans that have learned to show up this time of year and enjoy the chow line at this particular entry point.

I do want to say that although there is some hesitancy in talking about climate change in some quarters, some people are not hesitant, and I refer to the legendary Bob Marshall, who has described this as the “mugging of the atmosphere” by our emissions.

Having spoken with resiliency experts and seen Louisiana by both sky and in that terrific LSU model, I then took to the water to visit this restora-

tion work in action. This is Davis Pond here, and it was conceived as a freshwater diversion to push back saltwater intrusion into the marshes with counterpressure from added saltwater, but it turned out that it grew marshland, and it is now teaming with coastal wildlife and dozens of different bird species.

Here we are. We traveled in an airboat to get down there. I also visited hunter and fisherman Ryan Lambert at his lodge in Buras. He showed me some of his personal efforts to restore the delta and its wetlands. I am out here on his boat driving around the area that he has been working, pointing out how quickly, if you give nature a chance, she can rebound. A scientist with the National Wildlife Federation counted over 30 species of birds just while we were waiting to board the boat, and he spotted over 40 species while we were out on the water.

The sights and sounds of a healthy marsh were encouraging and a reminder of nature’s God-blessed ability to find a way to not only survive but flourish, given the chance.

Louisiana faces challenges ahead, but Louisianans are united in a David versus Goliath-scale battle to protect their State. To achieve that goal, I believe Louisiana must urge its fossil fuel tenants to accept responsibility for the climate crisis and commit to being part of the solution. Louisiana can be the crucible of compromise between the environment and the industry.

So thank you to all the wonderful advocates, researchers and community and State leaders I met in my visit to Louisiana. Thank you to Senator CASSIDY for his hospitality to me while I was down there. The dedication of the Louisianans I met to their coast is admirable and inspiring, and Louisiana’s coastal plan is a model for other coastal States.

I would also like to thank the senior Senator from Louisiana for welcoming me the way he did and for joining me here today. This is a big moment for me to have this be the first bipartisan “Time to Wake Up.” We share a commitment to giving our coast the respect, attention, and support they are due. I look forward to working together with Senator CASSIDY to find opportunities for our government to play its role in supporting our coastal resiliency and restoration.

Thank you, my friend.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. CASSIDY. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the postcloture time on the Barker nomination expire at 11:45 a.m., Wednesday, May 1; I further ask that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, and the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action.

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