

legislative graveyard where even the most bipartisan, broadly supported legislation like background checks can't even get a vote or a discussion. Here we are at the end of another week in the Senate. This week, we have done nothing but process nominations. It is not because there is nothing else to do. There are over 100 bills—many non-controversial and many bipartisan—that have passed the House and are awaiting Senate action, but Leader MCCONNELL has turned the Senate into a legislative graveyard.

When the American people demand action, Leader MCCONNELL does nothing. When the American people demand action, the Senate Republicans are in obeisance to this strategy of a graveyard, even when in their hearts they may know doing that is not right and they would like to debate the issues, whatever their views.

Leader MCCONNELL promised to preside over an open Senate, with vigorous debate and amendment votes and the ability to vote on issues of the day. He promised that, and he said no matter which party offered the ideas. Leader MCCONNELL is breaking those promises when he consigns bill after bill—every one of them needed by America, needed by the middle class, needed by working people—every one of them to a legislative graveyard. So there are no debates, no amendments, no progress, no hope for the American people as the Senate continues to be in such a legislative graveyard.

PUERTO RICO

Madam President, on Puerto Rico, last night President Trump held his first Florida rally of the year in Panama City, in the heart of the Florida Panhandle, which was so awfully devastated by Hurricane Michael last year. President Trump's speech contained all the usual demagoguery and bloviating, but one thing in particular stuck in his craw. The President used his rally in Florida to denigrate once again the island of Puerto Rico, to repeat falsehoods about how much aid it has received, and to pit one American against another, which seems to be his MO.

Again, the President said that Puerto Rico has gotten \$91 billion of disaster aid—flat-out false. They received a hair over \$11 billion.

Mr. President, ask your budget people how many dollars Puerto Rico has received, and they will not tell you the \$91 billion falsehood you have repeated over and over.

Again, I saw the President pit Americans against each other, going so far as to hold up a flimsy graphic to get Floridians in his audience to turn against Americans in Puerto Rico. At a time when we need unity, at a time when we should be together, with all the threats challenging us—domestic and foreign and all the other types of challenges—all the President can do is to appeal to people's worst instincts and divide us. We are humans. We are made by God. We have good and bad in each of us.

The President should be appealing to the good side, not the bad side, but all he does is the bad side. It is a shame.

Of course, he said that Puerto Ricans should be grateful for whatever disaster aid they have received, as a pretext for not doing more. Does he say that to the people of Florida: You shouldn't get any more aid because you received some already and you should be grateful. Of course not, it is a double standard. President Trump ought to be ashamed of himself for condescending to and publicly mocking a community that is still suffering. These are men, women, and children. They still don't have their homes, their hospitals, their schools. They can't go on with life, and he is mocking them? What did they do wrong? They are American citizens. I sometimes cannot believe the depth of cruelty that the President uses to treat fellow American citizens this way.

The fact remains, we can end the impasse over disaster aid at a moment's notice. To the people of Florida: All you have to do is tell your Senators to vote for the full aid package, including aid to Puerto Rico, and you will get all the aid you need, all the aid that Congress has allocated. Just do that.

But Republican Senators, after Donald Trump went in and said no more aid to Puerto Rico, blindly bowed in obeisance. The House will never pass a bill that doesn't treat Puerto Rico as fairly as it treats the other States of the Union.

Let's decide now that we are going to help every corner of America that is hit by disaster, because that is what Americans have always done.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Madam President, on the climate and dark money, I want to return to the topic of climate change, specifically today. Why in our political system has progress on climate change been so slow? Why is it that so many Republicans here in the Senate are afraid to say yes to three questions: Is climate change real? Is it caused by humans? Should we do something about it? They are afraid to say yes on any of those. Why? It is so obvious to almost everybody else.

Well, one of the dominant reasons is that for decades Big Oil, Big Gas, and Big Coal have devoted huge financial resources to stymie political progress and sow doubt about climate science. For years, one of the biggest perpetrators of this anti-climate campaign has been the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

The national chamber of commerce, which bears almost no resemblance to local chambers across the country, has acted like a fossil fuel front group. It accepts millions of dollars in dark money, will not reveal its secret donors, and has consistently fought any attempts by our government to grapple with climate change—carbon pricing, reducing methane emissions, and even the Paris climate accords.

The game has become so obvious that major American corporations have disassociated themselves with the chamber over its climate policies.

Recently, the chamber has begun to talk as if it intends to get better on climate change. They added a new page to their website and announced an "energy innovation" agenda. I welcome the progress. But truthfully, the chamber has made a shocking about-face from climate denier to supposed climate believer and advocate. It is hard not to be skeptical. Now, if the chamber were serious about combating climate change, it would disclose its donors and let the world see that it is finally changing. Maybe it would even start endorsing different candidates or getting behind truly bold legislation. Maybe they can come here and lobby that we should support the Paris accords. Until that day, the chamber's so-called big change on climate seems to be cosmetic.

It may seem that I am spending an awful lot of time on one group, but it matters. The chamber is part of a vast network of generally rightwing organizations that accept and disseminate billions of dollars of special interest money with zero disclosure. It has warped our political process by creating a financial incentive for many of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to oppose climate policies that deal with climate change, to oppose appropriate consumer protections, to oppose environmental protections, and to oppose issues such as gun safety, as well.

Senator SHELDON WHITEHOUSE of Rhode Island has done an amazing—an outstanding job—of bringing this issue to the forefront and exposing the web of dark money that lurks evilly behind our politics. I want to thank and commend him for it.

I am glad that organizations like the chamber are feeling the heat for opposing climate change and proposed solutions. They should. But the bigger and more pervasive issue is that dark money will continue to flow into our political system until we change it. Until we deal with it or until groups start voluntary disclosures, in all likelihood these organizations will continue to frustrate the progress behind the scenes and the longing we all have to keep our planet the beautiful place that it is and to prevent the seas from rising and the weather from changing and the coral reefs from disappearing. That will not become a reality as long as this dark money is still having a stranglehold on so many of the other party.

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.

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

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

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to speak as in morning

business for up to 5 minutes, and that following my remarks, Senator ROSEN be recognized to speak as in morning business for as much time as she may consume.

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

WELCOMING SENATOR ROSEN OF NEVADA

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Thank you, Madam President. I come to the floor today to honor my colleague and dear friend, Senator JACKY ROSEN, as she prepares to deliver her maiden speech in this Chamber.

Senator ROSEN has spent her career pushing boundaries and advocating for innovation and inclusivity. She is bringing that vision to the U.S. Senate, where she has already proved herself to be a strong advocate for Nevadans by fighting to bolster our State's tech industries, supporting our veterans, and protecting Nevadans' healthcare.

When JACKY was elected to the Senate, we sat down and talked about how we could best serve Nevada together. We requested different committee assignments so we could be sure we were covering all the issue areas that are important to Nevadans. We made sure our staffs were connected and working together on projects, not only in DC but in the great Silver State of Nevada.

We committed to coming together every Wednesday morning in DC to welcome Nevadans to the Capitol and hear their stories. Those Wednesday morning constituent coffees are one of the highlights, I think, of both of our weeks. Anyone lucky enough to work with JACKY knows that she works tirelessly to build consensus and find solutions that help better the lives of Nevada families. I am honored to work beside her every day to serve the people of Nevada. I am proud to call her my friend, and I want to congratulate her on making her maiden speech this morning. I look forward to this and to many more as we continue to fight together for the Silver State.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

MAIDEN SPEECH

Ms. ROSEN. Madam President, I thank Senator CORTEZ MASTO for that great introduction.

I am honored and humbled to address this distinguished body as the newest Senator from the great State of Nevada and to stand alongside an exceptional group of colleagues with a shared commitment to public service. I am especially honored to hold this seat, as it once belonged to a great Nevada public servant, Senator Richard Bryan. Senator Bryan served in just about every position in government, from assemblyman to Governor. He worked tirelessly to advance civil rights, empower women in government, and defend Nevada's public lands. I am so honored to carry his values with me to move Nevada forward.

As I take up this mantle in the Senate, I am prepared to continue Senator Bryan's legacy and work for Nevadans,

while also building toward a legacy of our own. I stand here as Nevada's 28th Senator and, for the first time in history, as one of two women to represent our State in the Senate. I am proud to be part of such an incredible movement of strong, passionate, trailblazing women like Senator CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO, who became the first female Senator to represent the great State of Nevada and the first Latina elected to serve in the Senate.

Everywhere, we are seeing women who are stepping up to lead, and I am thrilled to have the chance to empower women who are looking to break barriers along the way. By bringing more women to the decision-making table, we can open doors and make progress on issues that affect us and our hard-working families on a daily basis. When women put their minds together, there is no new ground we cannot break, and there is no glass ceiling we cannot shatter.

I stand here today to share my vision for how we can work together—on both sides of the aisle—to lay down a framework for progress because Nevadans and Americans everywhere are counting on us to go above and beyond, to overcome obstacles before us, and to find commonsense, forward-thinking solutions for the challenges of this new era—challenges like immigration reform, which protects our Dreamers and TPS recipients; challenges like a changing 21st century economy and climate change; and, of course, an issue that is so important to hard-working families everywhere, the challenge of access to affordable, quality healthcare.

Before I discuss where we are going, let me tell you just a bit about where I come from—my values and the ways in which my story has helped to shape who I am and how it will shape who I will be as Nevada's newest Senator.

I am the proud granddaughter of immigrants and a first-generation college graduate who worked my way through college waiting tables. Yes, I am a former member of the Culinary Workers Union, and I saved my tips in envelopes to pay for that college tuition. I am a computer programmer and a systems analyst who worked my way up in what has been long considered a male-dominated industry.

I am a wife to my husband Larry, a radiologist, whom I can always count on to be by my side. I am a mother to my wonderful daughter Miranda, whom I am so proud of and who inspires me every day to build a better future for our country.

I am a former president of my synagogue—the largest synagogue in Nevada—and during my tenure, I witnessed the beauty of our country's religious diversity and how community engagement strengthens America. I also learned the importance of working together to fight against anti-Semitism, which we are seeing now, once again, rear its ugly head here at home and around the globe.

Remembering where I come from, my story, my roots, this is what guides me every day to make decisions to help working families. When it comes to issues like college affordability and education, equal pay for equal work, labor rights, combating hate and anti-Semitism, and standing up for Israel, I can speak from personal experience.

I am reminded that my story is just one of many from Las Vegas to Reno, to Searchlight, to Lovelock, and everywhere in between because I hear from Nevadans who share some of those same stories from every part of the rich, vibrant fabric that makes up our diverse State, including Latinos, Asian Americans, African Americans, Tribal communities, and beyond.

When I think of the shores of Lake Tahoe and of Lake Mead, the majestic canyons of Red Rock, the open skies across the desert, and the mountains that shine below them like jewels in the sun, I think of home. Nothing rings more true to me than saying home means Nevada to me.

YUCCA MOUNTAIN

Madam President, we are a State that was born to take on challenges. We come together from every walk of life to make cities that shine from out of the desert. We are battle born, and we are battle tested, and it is our grit, our perseverance, and our diversity that truly capture who we are. It is those same qualities that will help us change the face of our Nation.

Remembering where we come from—that philosophy—is a driving force behind my support for environmental policies that will protect our States' treasures, including our mountains, rivers, and lakes.

I am honored to represent the most beautiful State in the country, but there is one environmental issue that threatens Nevada's beautiful landscapes and the families that call our State home, and that is Yucca Mountain. Nevada has made it clear time and again that we will not become the Nation's dumping ground for nuclear waste. Yet we continue to see relentless efforts to turn our State into the Nation's sole nuclear waste repository without our consent, even after we have made our voices heard, even though Nevada does not create nuclear waste. Congress must respect our will and our rights as a State because our voice matters. I stand prepared to use every tool at my disposal to defend our State from attempts to revive this project.

I will continue to fight to keep our State beautiful by standing up for clean air and clean water, by protecting public lands and investing in clean energy, by taking real action to address climate change. I know we can leave the world a better place for future generations.

We also know there are commonsense ways to address our climate challenges, including investing in renewable energy right at home. In Nevada, solar