

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I think we are running a few minutes behind. We have had a real crush of business here in the last hour. I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 15 minutes.

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

NOMINATION OF DAN R. BROUILLETTE

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, every Senator knows the House is now in the middle of an impeachment inquiry. Here in this Chamber, the Senate has been considering the nomination of Dan Brouillette to be Energy Secretary, replacing Rick Perry.

In my view, questions about Secretary Perry's conduct in Ukraine—and what Mr. Brouillette may know about that conduct—tie this nomination to the impeachment inquiry in an important way. I have come to believe there are several significant unanswered questions about Secretary Perry's role in changing the board of a state-owned energy company called Naftogaz.

What Secretary Perry, his campaign donors, and certain crooked associates of Rudy Giuliani stood to gain from those changes is something the Senate ought to be digging into. We have been hearing about Secretary Perry's role in Donald Trump's scheme with respect to withholding a meeting and military aid until Ukrainian President Zelensky agreed to interfere in the 2020 elections in the United States.

The investigations seem to be piling up. Every time a new piece of information comes to light, it raises yet more and more questions about schemes that sure look, based on the facts, to be corrupt. Somehow, Secretary Perry seems to be making his way out the door without facing much, if any, scrutiny. Now the Senate is trying to fast-track his replacement.

I will put it simply: Enough, enough. It is time for the Senate to get some answers instead of just saying everything is A-OK at the Energy Department.

I am going to take just a few minutes to explain what this is all about. Mr. PERRY is famously one of the "three amigos" who took control of U.S. ties with Ukraine under the direction of the President and his personal lawyer, Rudy Giuliani. Secretary Perry attended President Zelensky's inauguration in May. They held a private meeting. It has been reported that Secretary Perry pushed President Zelensky to fire members of the board of Naftogaz—a Ukrainian energy giant—and replace them with Secretary Perry's own political donors.

At a second meeting with Ukrainian government and energy sector officials, Secretary Perry reportedly said the entire board ought to be replaced. The Associated Press reported that one person who attended the meeting said that "he was floored by the American requests because the person had always viewed the U.S. government 'as having a higher ethical standard.'"

The changes Secretary Perry was seeking lined up with changes sought by two shady characters named Lev Parnas and Igor Fruman, associates of Rudy Giuliani's. They also wanted different leadership at Naftogaz.

I am going to read now from an Associated Press report.

As Rudy Giuliani was pushing Ukrainian officials last spring to investigate one of Donald Trump's main political rivals, a group of individuals with ties to the president and his personal lawyer were also active in the former Soviet republic. Their aims were profit, not politics.

This circle of businessmen and Republican donors touted connections to Giuliani and Trump while trying to install new management at the top of Ukraine's massive state gas company. Their plan was to then steer lucrative contracts to companies controlled by Trump allies, according to two people with knowledge of their plans.

Federal prosecutors are now investigating Rudy Giuliani's role. A Naftogaz official is reportedly cooperating in the investigation, and some of Rick Perry's political donors did get a lucrative oil and gas deal in Ukraine after Perry began pressuring the Ukrainian President for changes.

Perry admits he was in contact with Giuliani about Ukraine. It was also revealed in impeachment testimony that Perry was seemingly made aware in July of the Trump scheme where it seemed like everybody was involved in Ukraine.

To get it straight, I think this is the bottom line: Secretary Perry has somehow managed to stay on the fringes of this whole scheme, but it sure looks to me like he was right at the heart of serious ethical compromises. President Trump has claimed he made the call to Ukraine's President that prompted the whistleblower's complaint at Perry's request. Everywhere you look in the Ukraine scandal, it looks like there is crooked behavior all over.

I have a hard time believing that Secretary Perry booked his own flight for these meetings, sauntered out the back door of the Energy Department, and freelanced his own shady Ukraine policy without anybody knowing about it.

That brings me back to the Brouillette nomination. Dan Brouillette is currently the Deputy Energy Secretary. He is the No. 2 person at the Department. He is the Deputy to the "amigo."

At his confirmation hearing, sitting on the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, which I at one time chaired, I thought it was important to ask Mr. Brouillette some basic questions about what I have outlined here. What I wanted to know wasn't real complicated: Whom did Secretary Perry meet with regarding Ukraine and Naftogaz? He was a powerful guy, and he wielded major influence over a nation that is dependent on aid from the United States as it resists aggression by Russia. Who else was in the loop with Secretary Perry?

Deputy Secretary Brouillette acknowledged in my questions only that

there were meetings but provided no further details about who took part in them. In followup written questions, again, he just wasn't forthcoming. He wouldn't provide any answers.

I am sending a letter to Deputy Secretary Brouillette to give him yet another chance to answer basic questions: To whom was Mr. Brouillette referring when he acknowledged Perry held meetings on seeking changes at Naftogaz; when and where did those meetings take place; to whom outside the Department did Secretary Perry speak regarding changes in Naftogaz and the substance of those communications; and then, whether Department staff were involved in meetings at which changes to Naftogaz leadership came up, who the staff were, and what materials were produced.

I will make it clear, I find it implausible the Secretary of Energy was unstaffed on all this. I would think, for an important meeting like this, Secretary Perry would have individuals from the Department of Energy who were involved in these discussions that Mr. Brouillette has now acknowledged took place, but we can't get any names. We can't get any answers at all.

I think it is seriously an error for the Senate to just rush to this nomination without getting answers to the questions I have outlined. Indictments are flying. Investigations reveal major wrongdoing. Every stone that gets overturned in this process reveals a lot more generally about a rotten scheme. It just seems to me that Secretary Perry is a significant figure in this scandal, and he is just trying to get out of dodge.

To me, this ought to be an opportunity for this body, the U.S. Senate, to stand up and demand accountability from the Trump administration and all of those in the administration who can provide information that, I think, provides a modest amount of information—a modest amount of information—about discussions that could very well be relevant to this whole Ukraine scheme.

Mr. Giuliani already had associates indicted. Just yesterday, there were differences of opinion in the testimony about what Mr. PERRY's involvement was all about. Practically every day there are unanswered questions about this matter. Because I believe the Senate deserves to have answers to the questions I have raised, because I think this is just accountability 101 to have this information, I will be voting no today on cloture. My understanding is that no matter how the Senate is recorded today, there will be some opportunity over the holiday break for Senators, staff, and those who are doing investigative work on this to get more details. I certainly think that without the question I have been asking and the modest amount of information they would disclose—information, frankly, I think Secretary Perry, the Energy Department, and the Trump administration could produce quite

quickly if they didn't want to spend the time stonewalling—I think given that, it is not responsible to advance this nomination through an affirmative cloture vote today, so I will be voting no. My hope is that over the next week or so, we can start to get some answers to these basic questions.

I will tell you, I have just gone through five townhall meetings at home in rural and urban areas. Everybody I represent at home thinks there ought to be more accountability in Washington, DC, rather than less.

Without answers to the questions I have outlined today, there is no question that with respect to accountability, the Senate, by voting cloture today, would be settling for less.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I am pleased that at any moment now, we will move to invoke cloture on the nomination of Dan Brouillette to be Secretary of Energy. As folks know, he is currently serving as our Deputy Secretary of Energy. In my view, he has excelled in that role since being confirmed by this body in a strong bipartisan vote back in August of 2017. He has run the Department on a daily basis. He has been helping Secretary Perry set an agenda that has been focused on energy security and technological innovation. He has been a good partner of the Energy Committee—honest, open, and responsive. I have certainly appreciated all of his leadership.

We commend him to this body. He did very well in his nomination hearing before the Energy and Natural Resources Committee. I believe he will do very well in his new role. I encourage all Members to work with us to confirm him as soon as possible today.

#### CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The bill 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 Dan R. Brouillette, of Texas, to be Secretary of Energy.

Mitch McConnell, John Boozman, Richard Burr, Shelley Moore Capito, John Cornyn, Mike Crapo, John Barrasso, Roy Blunt, John Thune, Steve Daines, Thom Tillis, Kevin Cramer, Chuck Grassley, Tom Cotton, Rick Scott, Roger F. Wicker, Cindy Hyde-Smith.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Dan R. Brouillette, of Texas, to be Secretary of Energy, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

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

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 74, nays 18, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 366 Ex.]

#### YEAS—74

Alexander	Fischer	Peters
Barrasso	Gardner	Portman
Blackburn	Graham	Risch
Blunt	Grassley	Roberts
Boozman	Hassan	Romney
Braun	Hawley	Rounds
Burr	Heinrich	Rubio
Cantwell	Hoeven	Sasse
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Scott (FL)
Cardin	Inhofe	Scott (SC)
Carper	Johnson	Shaheen
Casey	Jones	Shelby
Collins	Kaine	Sinema
Cooms	Kennedy	Smith
Cornyn	King	Stabenow
Cotton	Lankford	Sullivan
Cramer	Lee	Tester
Crapo	Manchin	Thune
Cruz	McConnell	Tillis
Daines	McSally	Toomey
Duckworth	Murkowski	Udall
Durbin	Murphy	Warner
Enzi	Murray	Wicker
Ernst	Paul	Young
Feinstein	Perdue	

#### NAYS—18

Baldwin	Hirono	Rosen
Bennet	Leahy	Schatz
Blumenthal	Markey	Schumer
Brown	Menendez	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Merkeley	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Reed	Wyden

#### NOT VOTING—8

Booker	Isakson	Sanders
Cassidy	Klobuchar	Warren
Harris	Moran	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 74, the nays are 18.

The motion is agreed to.

The Senator from Ohio.

#### NASA PLUM BROOK STATION

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I would like to talk about a couple of topics.

First, I thank my colleagues on the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee for very recently approving legislation to rename the NASA Plum Brook Station in Sandusky, OH, after Ohio's own and a true American hero—the late Neil Armstrong. I now, of course, urge that this legislation be taken up by the full Senate and that we get it passed. There is an identical bill in the House. We hope to join both bills so that it may be sent to the President for his signature very soon.

The NASA Plum Brook Station is a state-of-the-art testing facility. It is near Sandusky, OH, and is a terrific facility that is doing a lot of the testing right now for both NASA and some private sector companies. It is part of the NASA Glenn complex that is headquartered in Cleveland, OH.

It is an impressive operation for a lot of reasons, but the one that is most exciting right now is their work on the Artemis Project. This is, of course, NASA's plan to put astronauts back on the Moon by 2024, including having the first woman go to the Moon. This mission will also lay the groundwork for future expeditions to the next great leap in spaceflight—that, of course, being a manned mission to Mars. It is exciting stuff.

At Plum Brook, they are already testing critical components of the rocket engines that are scheduled to carry Artemis astronauts into space starting next year. Very soon, they are going to be testing the spacecraft itself. We hope it will arrive at Plum Brook within the next few weeks where it will undergo about 4 months of testing.

This past summer, I and my colleague, Ohio Senator SHERRON BROWN, introduced this legislation to rename the facility after Neil Armstrong, and we did so on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Apollo 11 Moon landing, from which, of course, Neil Armstrong became world famous for being the first person to walk on the surface of the Moon.

Ultimately, Neil Armstrong was a test pilot. We think of him as an astronaut. Some know that he was also a fighter pilot and that he was a veteran of the Korean conflict. He was just an amazing individual—humble, smart. He was a very patriotic individual. How appropriate and perfect that as a test pilot, which he was during his whole post-fighter pilot career until his time as an astronaut, Plum Brook be named after him.

By the way, Neil's family agrees with that, as does NASA, and as do others we have talked to. So we are hoping that this will be a fitting way to honor a man who, for all of his accomplishments, saw himself, first and foremost, as a patriot who pushed the boundaries of flight. Therefore, the test facility is very dear to them.

I talked to him about this test facility. After one of my visits there, I went to see him at his home and told him about the progress they were making. At that time, they were trying to revamp some of the facilities there. He was really excited about it. He was a very modest man and did not want things named after him. He viewed his service to his country as the reward. That is all he ever wanted in life. That makes it all the more fitting that we, in fact, do name this after him. It is a great model for young people and, certainly, for those who are interested in avionics and spacecraft and in being astronauts. His example is one we should all look up to.