

will have that access. That will result in 654,500 fewer unintended pregnancies, 291,500 fewer unplanned births, 280,500 fewer induced abortions. If you care about abortion and you don't believe that is the right alternative, then you should support family planning because that gives families and couples an option to ensure they can have the children they want, and it would provide for 1,320 fewer deaths of women.

While these numbers are stark, the transformative effect of simply having access to family planning information and services on the lives of women and their families should not be underestimated.

The most vulnerable women who are reached by family planning programs report that learning about family planning options, receiving services to prevent unwanted pregnancies, and ensuring that wanted pregnancies are healthy and happy so the babies they want to have are healthy and happy gives them some control over their lives. Many women are making healthcare choices for themselves and their families for the very first time with help from these programs.

These critical programs change lives, and our partners who implement these programs are indispensable. In October, USAID Administrator Mark Green said he could not "imagine an effective development Agency that doesn't partner with the community of faith." Luckily, he doesn't have to. For those people who were worried that family planning programs are not going to be implemented by our faith community, that is just wrong.

The family planning account goes to a range of program implementers, including healthcare providers, international NGOs, and faith-based organizations alike. All of these organizations have the goal of saving women's lives and saving the lives of their children. They need more resources, not fewer, to do this work.

What else does the international family planning amendment do? It includes an additional \$33 million to USAID's family planning account for money that is rerouted away from the U.N. Population Fund.

Again, unlike what the blogs are mistakenly saying, this is not money that currently goes to UNFPA's lifesaving operations. Instead, it will be redirected back into the family planning account and contribute to the programs I just outlined.

Third, the amendment requires the Government Accountability Office to produce a report that evaluates the efficacy of family planning programs and their structure. Again, this was another bipartisan effort with my Republican colleagues to ensure that our U.S. dollars are most effective and they contribute to programs and services that are most effective. Again, if you have a concern about how family planning dollars are being spent, then you should support this amendment because it is going to give us data and in-

formation to show what is effective and what isn't.

Finally, the amendment includes language to reaffirm an existing non-discrimination policy within USAID. This is an existing nondiscrimination policy. This is not a new policy. That policy within USAID ensures the services funded by these accounts reach all segments of the population.

As I said, this is not a new policy. The anti-discrimination policy has existed for several years, and it is not targeted toward faith-based organizations, despite what some of the blogs mistakenly are putting out there. In fact, the complaints I have heard in my office about single women being rejected for services didn't touch on work that faith-based organizations are doing.

I hope all of our colleagues in the Senate will not allow misinformation about the family planning dollars that are in the State and Foreign Operations bill to dismantle what has been a very important bipartisan achievement. Its impact is too great and its programs are too important to let them be killed by a campaign to try and mislead people about what is in the amendment.

I yield the floor.

NOMINATION OF AURELIA SKIPWITH

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I want to share with the Senate my reasons for opposing the nomination of Aurelia Skipwith to serve as the Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Let me begin by saying that I am disappointed to find myself in this position. When I had the privilege of serving as Governor of Delaware, I was able to assemble my own leadership team, so I appreciate how important it is that people in executive positions, including Presidents, have that same ability.

However, in article II of the Constitution, our Founders set up a system in which the President would nominate individuals to the top posts in our government and Senators would provide "advice and consent" on those nominees.

In order for the Senate to fulfill that constitutional role, those nominated individuals must cooperate with the confirmation process. And, unfortunately, Ms. Skipwith has not provided information requested by the Democrats during the nomination process.

Despite my repeated requests for the nominee to be more forthcoming—requests made twice in writing and twice in person, during her nomination process—Ms. Skipwith has refused. Instead, she has given me the impression that she does not take this confirmation process seriously.

Her lack of candor has elevated questions that already existed about her qualifications, her commitment to environmental conservation and whether she can ethically lead the Fish and Wildlife Service.

Therefore, I cannot support this nomination.

Ms. Skipwith first joined the Trump administration in April 2017, when she was appointed as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Fish and Wildlife and Parks, a non-Senate-confirmed political appointment at the Department of the Interior.

During her tenure there, the Fish and Wildlife Service proposed and finalized controversial regulations that drastically altered implementation of the Endangered Species Act.

The Service has also issued a legal opinion that changes the way the Department of the Interior enforces the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Former senior Interior officials from every administration since the early 1970s, both Republican and Democrat, have strongly opposed this Migratory Bird Treaty Act legal opinion. At her confirmation hearing, Ms. Skipwith vehemently defended it.

Prior to her controversial tenure at the Interior Department, Ms. Skipwith had no previous work experience related to conservation or wildlife management—none.

By contrast, the 16 individuals who previously served as Fish and Wildlife Service Directors for both Republican and Democratic Presidents had an estimated average of 12 years of experience at the Fish and Wildlife Service before taking on the Director role. They also have an estimated average of more than 22 years of professional experience in fields related to wildlife or fisheries management.

Ms. Skipwith has also not seemed to make up for her lack of previous experience while on the job. At her confirmation hearing, when asked to name the conservation scientist who had most influenced her career and her approach to wildlife and fisheries management, Ms. Skipwith struggled to name any conservation scientist. Ultimately, she named a former Monsanto vice president with whom she used to work, but she misremembered his name.

This was not an insignificant misstep. To me, it was revealing. Ms. Skipwith's response to my simple question represented a clear lack of familiarity with the basics of wildlife management, a troubling quality for a Fish and Wildlife Director nominee.

By contrast, Ms. Skipwith does have significant experience in the agribusiness industry. Before joining the Trump administration, she worked for Monsanto, one of the world's largest agrochemical firms. Monsanto regularly has business interests before the Interior Department. She also worked for Alltech, a Kentucky-based agricultural products company.

She also co-founded AVC Global, an agribusiness-technology start up, and was employed by Gage International, a Washington, DC, based lobbying firm founded by her fiancé.

That is why even before her confirmation hearing, I asked Ms. Skipwith some basic questions about how these companies operate and

whether Ms. Skipwith has recused herself from working on those issues. Unfortunately, Ms. Skipwith has refused to answer those questions.

She has repeatedly refused to provide her calendars with the appointments she has had as a Department of the Interior official. This information could be made available to any member of the public under the Freedom of Information Act, but she has refused to provide it to me for months within the confirmation process.

This information is important because Ms. Skipwith's former employer, Gage International, has represented water utilities that have lobbied Congress to weaken Western water policy and the Endangered Species Act.

Unanswered questions also remain about Ms. Skipwith's role in the development of a controversial repeal of an existing ban on using pesticides that have been shown to harm birds and bees in national wildlife refuges. And one of the largest producers of these pesticides is Monsanto, another one of Ms. Skipwith's former employers.

Yet when Senator GILLIBRAND asked Ms. Skipwith about her role in the ban's repeal, Ms. Skipwith defended the reversal but denied any role in the decision. This answer does not appear to be consistent with some of the email records that have been obtained under Freedom of Information Act, which show that she expressed interest in the matter and received materials on the issue from career staff.

If Ms. Skipwith was indeed involved with the decision to reverse the pesticides ban, it would constitute a violation of the ethics pledge she signed when she joined the Department. An examination of Ms. Skipwith's calendar entries could clear up these outstanding questions, but her lack of cooperation makes that impossible.

This lack of being forthcoming is troubling, not only because it undermines the Senate's advice and consent role for Presidential nominees, but it also because it demonstrates the nominee's may not be cooperative when it comes to congressional oversight.

I have found that, when a nominee is unwilling to provide information as part of their confirmation process, they almost always prove to be even more defiant to congressional oversight requests after they are confirmed.

I urge my colleagues, especially my Republican colleagues, to take this matter seriously. In fact, I would urge my Republican colleagues to remember these words spoken by my friend, former Congressman Trey Gowdy of South Carolina.

In June 2012, during the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee contempt proceedings against Attorney General Holder, then Congressman Gowdy said: "The notion that you can withhold information and documents from Congress no matter whether you are the party in power or not in power is wrong. Respect for the

rule of law must mean something, irrespective of the vicissitudes of political cycles."

Eventually, whether it is in 1 year or in 4 years or in 8, we will eventually have another Democratic administration. And when that time comes, Republicans in Congress will want officials in that Democratic administration to answer questions and respond to congressional oversight requests.

I fear that my Senate colleagues will find the process completely broken by then if we continue undermining our duty as Senators to both provide advice and consent on Presidential nomination and to conduct congressional oversight.

This clear defiance of our sworn constitutional duty and congressional oversight role diminishes the Senate, weakens our intricate system of checks and balances, and undermines the trust of the American people.

Beyond her lack of qualifications and her questionable role in some of this administration's major conservation policies, there are too many troubling concerns and questions about this nominee that remain unaddressed or unanswered.

Therefore, I will be opposing this nomination, and I encourage my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the vote that was going to start at 11:45 a.m. start now.

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

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Skipwith nomination?

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.
The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), and the Senator from Alabama (Mr. SHELBY).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH), 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 (Mrs. FISCHER). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 52, nays 39, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 395 Ex.]

YEAS—52

Alexander	Braun	Cotton
Barrasso	Capito	Cramer
Blackburn	Cassidy	Crapo
Blunt	Collins	Cruz
Boozman	Cornyn	Daines

Enzi	Lankford	Rubio
Ernst	Lee	Sasse
Fischer	Manchin	Scott (FL)
Gardner	McConnell	Scott (SC)
Graham	McCally	Sinema
Grassley	Moran	Sullivan
Hawley	Murkowski	Thune
Hoeven	Perdue	Tillis
Hyde-Smith	Portman	Toomey
Inhofe	Risch	Wicker
Johnson	Roberts	Young
Jones	Romney	
Kennedy	Rounds	

NAYS—39

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

NOT VOTING—9

Booker	Isakson	Sanders
Burr	Klobuchar	Shelby
Duckworth	Paul	Warren

The nomination was confirmed.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of John Joseph Sullivan, of Maryland, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Russian Federation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, all postcloture time is expired.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Sullivan nomination?

Mr. INHOFE. Madam President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), and the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. PAUL).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH), 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 result was announced—yeas 70, nays 22, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 396 Ex.]

YEAS—70

Alexander	Blunt	Capito
Barrasso	Boozman	Cardin
Blackburn	Braun	Carper