

of Staff, United States Air Force, and appointment in the United States Air Force to the grade indicated while assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under title 10, U.S.C., sections 601 and 9033: to be General.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nomination.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of General Charles Q. Brown, Jr.?

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

The VICE PRESIDENT. 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. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) are necessarily absent.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote or to change their vote?

The result was announced—yeas 98, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 115 Ex.]

YEAS—98

Alexander	Gillibrand	Portman
Baldwin	Graham	Reed
Barrasso	Grassley	Risch
Bennet	Harris	Roberts
Blackburn	Hassan	Romney
Blumenthal	Hawley	Rosen
Blunt	Heinrich	Rounds
Booker	Hirono	Rubio
Boozman	Hoeven	Sanders
Braun	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Brown	Inhofe	Schatz
Burr	Johnson	Schumer
Cantwell	Jones	Scott (FL)
Capito	Kaine	Scott (SC)
Carper	Kennedy	Shaheen
Casey	King	Shelby
Cassidy	Klobuchar	Sinema
Collins	Lankford	Smith
Coons	Leahy	Stabenow
Cornyn	Lee	Sullivan
Cortez Masto	Loeffler	Tester
Cotton	Manchin	Thune
Cramer	McConnell	Tillis
Crapo	McSally	Toomey
Cruz	Menendez	Udall
Daines	Merkley	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Moran	Warner
Durbin	Murkowski	Warren
Enzi	Murphy	Whitehouse
Ernst	Murray	Wicker
Feinstein	Paul	Wyden
Fischer	Perdue	Young
Gardner	Peters	

NOT VOTING—2

Cardin Markey

The VICE PRESIDENT. On this vote the yeas are 98, the nays are 0, and the historic nomination of Gen. Charles Q. Brown, Jr., as the U.S. Air Force Chief of Staff is confirmed.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

TAXPAYER FIRST ACT OF 2019— MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. CAPITO). The Senator from Tennessee.

RACISM

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, U.S. Senator TIM SCOTT, who is an African-American Republican from South Carolina, once told our Bible study that police in his hometown had stopped him several times for being a "Black man in the wrong place" even though, at the time, he was serving as chairman of the Charleston City Council.

During these last few days, I have been thinking a lot about what TIM SCOTT told us, and I wondered how many White Americans know things like that happen—White Americans like me. I wondered how I would feel if I were stopped for being a White man in the wrong place in my hometown, especially if most of the people in the town were Black. Would I feel hurt? Scared? Disillusioned? Angry? Weary? Disappointed? Intimidated? Probably all of those things.

One result of George Floyd's killing is that Black Americans are telling more stories like TIM SCOTT's. A professor of religious studies in Nashville wrote in *The Tennessean* that he carries a licensed firearm with him when he goes for a run. A columnist remembers that, as a 6-year-old, a White woman outside a Dallas gas station restroom said to him: Now, you don't belong here.

Well-educated Black businessmen count the times they have been profiled because of their race. One of my friends in Memphis, who is now vice president of Memphis's largest hospital, told me that when he went to Memphis State in the 1960s, it was clear to him that almost everyone thought that he didn't belong there.

During my lifetime, I have seen profound changes in racial attitudes. In 1958, when I enrolled at Vanderbilt University, I had no Black classmates. African Americans couldn't sit at lunch counters in Nashville. Blacks driving across Tennessee couldn't stay in most motels; they couldn't eat at most restaurants; they couldn't ride at the front of most public buses.

Then, in 1962, in the spring, the Vanderbilt University Board of Trustees changed its policy and admitted Black undergraduate students.

In August of 1963, I remember standing in the back of a huge crowd late that month. I was an intern in the U.S. Department of Justice, and I heard a booming voice—which was Dr. Martin Luther King's voice—say: "I have a dream."

In 1968, I was a Senate aide here, and I remember being in the room, which is today the Republican leader's office, where Senators were around a big table, and Senator Everett Dirksen and then-President Lyndon Johnson were writing the Civil Rights bill.

During the 1980s, I saw Tennessee adopt a Martin Luther King holiday and swear in its first Black supreme court justice. In the 1980s, the University of Tennessee hired its first two Black vice presidents, and it hired its first Black basketball coach who, as a teenager in Alcoa, once sat in the "colored" section at UT football games.

I saw the Voting Rights Act help to elect thousands of African-American public officials, including President Barack Obama and Senator TIM SCOTT. Last week, I asked Senator SCOTT if I could tell the story that he told us privately in the Bible study. He said: Sure. It happened again just last month.

So despite a half century of profound change, an African-American U.S. Senator is stopped again by police for being a Black man in the wrong place in his hometown. So what do we do now? Bringing those who killed George Floyd to justice will help. Dealing firmly with looters who hijack peaceful protests will help. Some new laws and government actions will help, such as criminal justice reform and permanent funding for historically Black colleges that became law in this Congress. It would also help to open schools and colleges in August and to open them safely because a good education is the surest ticket to a better future for minority students, and those students will suffer more from schools being closed.

Benjamin Hooks, the former NAACP president from Memphis—he was the national president of the NAACP; he lived in Memphis. He taught students this. Dr. Hooks said: America is a work in progress. We have come a long way, but we have a long way to go.

That long way to go, I would say, will not be as easy as passing laws. It will take changing behavior. One way to do that could be last week's peaceful protest organized by Nashville teenagers, which was a textbook example of First Amendment citizenship, and it hopefully will encourage more victims of racism to tell their stories and more White Americans to adjust our attitudes.

I am grateful that TIM SCOTT gave me permission to tell his story. Perhaps a good first step to changing attitudes toward racial discrimination would be for each of us who is White to ask ourselves this question: How would I feel if police in my hometown repeatedly stopped me for being a White man or a White woman in the wrong place, especially if most of the other people in the town were Black?

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. BLACKBURN). The Senator from New Mexico.

H.R. 1957

Mr. HEINRICH. Madam President, during these past months, in the midst of a pandemic that has kept most of us inside our homes, Americans have grown to appreciate, in new ways, how critical each moment of fresh air can

be to maintaining both our physical health and our mental well-being.

More people are getting outside than ever before, whether for a quick walk in their local neighborhood park or by seeking solitude on the many public lands held in trust for each and every American citizen. Coming from a State that is blessed with expansive skies and remote open spaces, I am convinced that investing in the future of our parks and our public lands will be a key path for our Nation to recover from the challenges we currently face.

That is why I am so proud that we are coming together this week to bring the Great American Outdoors Act to the Senate floor for a vote. Our bipartisan legislation will permanently and fully fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund and finally dedicate real resources to begin tackling the multibillion dollar infrastructure backlog in our national parks, our national forests, and our wildlife refuges.

If you have spent time enjoying your local parks, trail systems, ballfields or open space in the last 50 years, you have almost certainly experienced the impact of the Land and Water Conservation Fund. In New Mexico, LWCF has been instrumental in protecting some of our most treasured public lands—places like the Valles Caldera National Preserve with its trout streams, its high altitude meadows, and its massive elk herd. I know it is hard to tell, but this is actually me not catching a trout in the Valles Caldera National Preserve, but it is OK because any day in the preserve is a good day.

It also helped us establish the Valle de Oro National Wildlife Refuge in Albuquerque's South Valley, a place where young people will be introduced to nature, many for the first time in a really meaningful way, in a place that is at the heart of the local community now.

It purchased and protected the entirety—the entirety—of Ute Mountain, which is now a centerpiece of the Rio Grande del Norte National Monument. It almost boggles the mind to think about the scale of that, but this entire mountain used to be private, and there was no public access. Today, it is one of the most treasured places in Taos County, a rural county that relies on recreation and fishing and boating and camping to drive its economy.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund is also our most effective tool for opening up public access to our public lands. Just recently, the Land and Water Conservation Fund helped the Bureau of Land Management acquire land parcels that finally opened up public access to the rugged Sabinoso Wilderness in Northeastern New Mexico. This is Sabinoso, with its narrow mesas and spectacular canyon walls, which had previously been completely off limits to the public despite being part of the national wilderness system. It had become entirely surrounded by public land, so there wasn't a legal trail or a legal road to be able to enjoy

this place. Today, that landscape is something that the local community and visitors from afar share on a daily basis.

LWCF also funds recreation areas in neighborhood parks, sports fields, and communities all across our State and all across the Nation.

Last year, I was proud to be part of a successful bipartisan effort here in the Senate to permanently reauthorize LWCF. However, without guaranteed permanent funding, Congress still needs to approve LWCF expenditures each year, year after year after year. This has resulted in us falling far, far short of the \$900 million per year commitment that was originally intended when LWCF was established over five decades ago. Permanently and fully funding LWCF will be a monumental victory for conservation and the places where we all get outside.

It might well be the greatest investment that we can make that will pay off for many generations to come because every \$1 spent on LWCF creates an additional \$4 in economic value just in natural resources, goods, and services. That doesn't account for the long-term growth in the outdoor recreation sector and the tourism industry.

Teddy Roosevelt once said: "Conservation means development as much as it does protection." I believe that this type of investment in conservation is exactly what President Roosevelt meant.

Now, to the second leg of our landmark Great American Outdoors Act: We all know how important it is to rebuild the infrastructure in all of our national parks. You can't enjoy visiting these iconic American places if the bathrooms don't work, if the trails and the campgrounds aren't open, and if the roads are in disrepair. These are places that we are so proud of, that we cherish. From our oldest national parks, like Yellowstone and Yosemite, to our Nation's newest national park—one I am particularly close to—White Sands National Park in New Mexico, they all deserve better.

I am proud that the Great American Outdoors Act also includes dedicated funding to address similar infrastructure needs in our national forests, our wildlife refuges, and our Bureau of Land Management lands. We have also included dedicated funding to address the unacceptable maintenance backlog at schools managed by the Bureau of Indian Education. There are many BIE schools that serve students across Indian country that are in truly dangerous states of disrepair.

Through this legislation, we are finally going to make major progress on providing these students the kinds of safe schools and educational facilities that they truly deserve.

In the wake of our current economic crisis, rebuilding all this critical infrastructure will provide tens of thousands of new jobs across the Nation. It is estimated that just investing in fixing the National Park Service's infra-

structure alone would generate nearly 110,000 new jobs. These investments will also create a lasting heritage that will grow the outdoor recreation economy and provide us all with more opportunities to get outside. We know this can work.

The last time we as a nation faced an economic downturn on the scale of what we are experiencing today, Americans turned to our public lands. At the height of the Great Depression, Franklin Delano Roosevelt understood well that out-of-work Americans were not without worth but, rather, that they could leave an indelible mark on our country.

Now, over the years, I have been lucky to have met many of the men who served in the New Deal's Civilian Conservation Corps, or "CCC boys," as they often referred to themselves as. While most of these men have now passed away, sadly, the trails, the visitor centers, and the other important infrastructure on our public lands that they had so much pride in building almost a century ago continue to serve this Nation.

Throughout our long recovery, we will be a stronger nation if we can provide a new generation of Americans with meaningful opportunities to serve their country and leave their mark. There is so much work we need to do to rebuild our country.

In the midst of a real national reckoning on race over these recent weeks and as we continue to face the most severe economic and public health crises in generations, we should all be thinking about how we can rebuild our country in a way that includes all of us.

I firmly believe that this urgent goal is intertwined in our efforts this week in the Senate to grow opportunities in our great American outdoors. That is because our public lands and outdoor spaces are fundamental to who we are as Americans. They are the places where we can each find a real sense of belonging in this great country of ours. I think we must frankly acknowledge the uncomfortable truth that the outdoors has not always seemed like such a welcoming and accessible place for all Americans. Many of our national parks have a fraught history with the Tribal nations whose ancestral lands they are on. In New Mexico, many of our national forests were established on the very same lands that were deeded as land grants to families by the Spanish Crown.

Our public lands agencies have not always recognized that history, and there remains much more hard work ahead to provide meaningful seats at the table in the management of these landscapes to the communities whose heritage and living cultural ties date back hundreds and, in some cases, even thousands of years on these lands.

We must also recognize that outdoor excursions, which many of us, frankly, just take for granted, are not always within reach for all of us. I grew up exploring the outdoors on my family's

ranch and on surrounding lands, and I strongly believe that just one opportunity to get outside can change a child's whole world. It can inspire a lifetime commitment to conservation and encourage the health benefits that come with an active lifestyle.

Far too many kids don't have access to parks or open spaces. According to the Trust for Public Land, more than 100 million Americans—and that includes 28 million children—do not have access to a park within a 10-minute walk of their home. That number should be zero. Especially during the pandemic, that number should have been zero.

On top of physical accessibility, many children grow up in households where their parents cannot afford a vacation or they may feel rightly unsafe in these spaces, fearing an experience much like that of Christian Cooper in Central Park recently. We are not solving all of these challenges with what we are voting on here this week, but the increased investment in the Great American Outdoors Act will create more outdoor opportunities that I hope will truly benefit all of our Nation's children.

Our public lands are places we should all be able to access regardless of how thick or thin our wallets are, where we grow up, or the color of our skin. To learn about the natural wonders all around us, to really learn about our history by exploring the stories that reside in these places, I don't know of any easy answers to the numerous historic challenges we are facing as a nation today, but I do know that the right answers will come only if they are based on an honest appraisal of our deep-seated history—the good and the bad, the inspiring and the painful.

I believe one of the best ways for kids—really all of us—to learn about that complex history of our country is by visiting our public lands. Let me share just one example. When you visit El Morro National Monument in Western New Mexico, you walk up to a massive sandstone rock wall that dominates the high desert landscape around it. As you approach the cliff face, you begin to clearly see etchings and markings carved into the stone. These inscriptions give physical form to the history of many, many generations of people who have come to our State or called it home. There are petroglyphs from indigenous cultures, and right next to them—in some cases, even carved over them—are signatures of Spanish priests and conquistadors dating back to the late 1500s and early 1600s. There are records left by American homesteading families traveling westward on wagon trains. You can find the names of U.S. Army soldiers, including the strange but true Army Camel Corps that trained nearby in the late 1850s. And, yes, you heard that right, Camel Corps. The military was testing out camels in the New Mexico desert long before they started testing out fighter jets, rockets, and satellites in New Mexico.

When you see all of these names and images left behind on El Morro's Inscription Rock, you begin to appreciate how varied and also how messy the history of just this one place in our Nation is. You begin the process of learning that we have always been a country filled with diverse, resilient people but also a country riddled with conflicts and shortcomings. That is why it is so important to protect our parks and to protect our public lands.

These are the places where new generations of Americans will learn about both our natural and our human history. It is where they will go to find inspiration to chart new paths forward for our great Nation. For all of these reasons, I am so proud that we have come together on this legislation. We can all understand why investing in restoring and expanding opportunities in our parks and public lands has to be part of our national recovery. These are the places where all of us belong.

These are the places where all of us belong. These lands are our lands, and they heal us in a way that few things can.

I think of all the generations of Americans who have cared for these places so my family and I can enjoy them and learn from them today. With this historic legislation, the Great American Outdoors Act, we are going to help do our part to, literally, pay it forward.

We often invoke Teddy Roosevelt around here when working on conservation legislation. That legislation rarely measures up to the level of accomplishment that you see written in the story of his Presidency.

While I am not superstitious, I have to admit that I always visit his bust here in the Capitol just outside this Chamber before an important conservation vote. This bill—this bill—is the first time in my career that we have done something truly on the scale of Teddy Roosevelt's work, and I stand here proud to be a part of it.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, if you were to approach a random person on the street in any city in America today and say: Who is George Floyd, I could all but guarantee you that you would be met with a quick response. They would tell you about their horror at seeing this video of him being killed at the hands of a Minneapolis police officer; that, sadly, he was not the first victim of this type of crime; and that his death has now mobilized Americans of all races, ages, and backgrounds to demand action.

A friend of Mr. Floyd's for more than 35 years said:

Everybody in the world knows who George Floyd is today. Presidents, Kings, and Queens—they know George Floyd.

It is true. His name and face are everywhere. He is the subject of incredible artwork, passionate speeches, and dinner table conversations. He is the reason for marches and demonstrations in the cities from Houston to Minneapolis, to London, to Sydney. And today, after 2 weeks of grieving, the Floyd family will finally lay their beloved brother, father, and friend to rest in his hometown of Houston, TX.

Over the past 2 weeks, I have joined the chorus of voices calling for justice for Mr. Floyd. The first step is underway now that the officers have been charged, but this alone is not enough. Our country has a responsibility to do the best we can to prevent another family from burying their son or daughter as a result of excessive force by a police officer.

People of all races are now actively engaged in a national conversation about the racial injustices that exist in our country—one that is deeply needed and long overdue.

I want to assure the people of Texas that these conversations are happening in the U.S. Senate as well. Our friend and colleague Senator TIM SCOTT, from South Carolina, briefed the Republican conference today on the package of bills he is developing, with help from a group of our Members, to combat the racial injustice that still exists in our country today—particularly, as it applies to law enforcement.

This is a product of discussions that Leader MCCONNELL and I and others have had that would make real and lasting changes in communities across the country. I am proud to be part of the discussion led by Senator SCOTT, and I want to commend both him and the majority leader for their leadership and sense of urgency—one we all feel.

I think the necessary changes begin within our criminal justice system. Despite calls from some to defund or even disband the police, I believe these steps would do far more harm than good. It is not the right answer. Instead, we need to do a top-to-bottom review of our criminal justice system—something that has not happened in more than 50 years.

Senators PETERS, GRAHAM, and I have introduced a bill to create a National Criminal Justice Commission that would do just that. Over the course of 18 months, the Commission would examine our criminal justice system and provide recommendations on specific changes that should be made by Congress.

I have recommended this bill be included in the legislation Senator SCOTT is developing, and I am eager to work with him and all of our colleagues in the coming days in the hope of gaining broad bipartisan support. As we know, the only way things get done around here is with bipartisan support. I can't

think of anything more urgent, at this particular time, than we demonstrate we can come together and rise above our partisan differences and address this very real need.

Of course, there is nothing we can do to reverse what happened in Minneapolis, but there is a lot that can be done to prevent the name of another Black person in America from becoming a trending hashtag. A former classmate of Mr. Floyd's at Jack Yates High School said he always would say: "I'm going to change the world." While this is certainly not the way he or anyone could have fathomed, his story is sure to have a lasting impact on our country's history.

Today, I would like to offer, once again, my condolences to the entire Floyd family for their loss. I had the privilege of speaking with them on the telephone yesterday. Rodney Floyd reminded me that the family was from Houston, TX, and he said: We want Texas-size justice.

I said: Mr. Floyd, you will have it.

In the wake of this tragedy, I hope we can come together and deliver that change. I appreciate Senator SCOTT and Leader MCCONNELL leading the charge in the Senate and look forward to sharing more details of this proposal soon.

PAYCHECK PROTECTION PROGRAM

Madam President, on another matter, since the CARES Act was signed into law more than 2 months ago, millions of small businesses—I think 4.5 million businesses—have gotten loans from the Paycheck Protection Program. This program has allowed restaurants, retailers, manufacturers, farmers, and small businesses from virtually every sector of the economy to stay afloat and keep their employees on payroll.

Dr. Nora Walker operates a pulmonary practice in San Antonio—my hometown—which experienced a near stop on patient visits once COVID-19 began to soar in March. Payroll is her largest expense. Without that source of revenue, she and her husband were worried they wouldn't be able to pay the practice's three employees, but then the lifeline came in the form of the PPP loan. They applied for a \$26,000 loan, and they received the funds 2 weeks later. Because of that funding, these three employees could stay on the payroll as Dr. Walker continued her practice via telemedicine.

Her practice is a great example of PPP beneficiaries who don't receive enough attention—the small employers who took out small loans to help with a small number of workers in a very big way. From the truly small businesses to those that have grown their footprint in our State, the PPP has been essential to the survival of these businesses and to the livelihood of their employees.

As I have spoken to small businesses throughout the State, I have repeatedly heard how vital the PPP has been, but that praise has been coupled with requests to make improvements in the

program to ensure that it delivers the most efficient and maximum benefit.

Last week, we took the first step in making some of those changes through the Paycheck Protection Flexibility Act, which was signed into law by the President on Friday. It extends the amount of time businesses can use these funds from 8 weeks to 24 weeks and reduces the portion of the loan that must be used on payroll in order to be forgiven from 75 percent to 60 percent. Many of our restaurants and other businesses that simply closed their doors said there is no way they can spend our PPP loan on payroll when our business isn't even open. This provides flexibility for them and for others. In a nutshell, it gives small business owners the ability to use these loans when and where they are needed.

In the short term, these changes will be critical to protecting jobs and supporting small businesses as they reopen their doors following the coronavirus-induced shutdown. The jobs report we got this last week provides great hope and promise that this recovery will come soon.

In the longer term, we need to ensure that these loans don't end up creating any more burdens for small businesses down the road. Under normal circumstances, businesses can deduct their expenses from their taxable income. Of course, the Paycheck Protection Program covers the cost to many of these expenses, and there is some confusion—particularly, at Treasury—with how businesses should handle their taxes.

I believe the intent of Congress was to allow businesses to continue deducting those expenses. Basically, we were trying to get the money where it was needed most the fastest. By allowing them to continue to deduct those expenses, we do that, but the guidance recently issued by the IRS said the opposite.

While it is fair to say this has led to confusion and frustration among many, Congress needs to take action to eliminate the misunderstanding. Last month, I introduced a bill to make clear that small businesses can still deduct their expenses that were paid for with a forgiven Paycheck Protection loan for their taxes. I know this is an unusual circumstance, but isn't the pandemic the most unusual circumstance we experienced in our lifetime? It calls for extraordinary measures, and I believe, under the circumstances, trying to get money to these small businesses is necessary.

Our goal with this loan program was to help them remain solvent and keep their employees on payroll so they can recover as soon as possible. Without this change, the PPP loan will fail to deliver the maximum on this most basic objective.

The bipartisan Small Business's Expense Protection Act will ensure that small businesses have the cashflow they need to survive today and prosper

in the future. After all, we are not interested in handing out meals now only to slap people on the hands later for taking free food.

The bill has bipartisan support in the Senate. In fact, I introduced it with the chairman and ranking member of the Finance Committee, Senators GRASSLEY and WYDEN, as well as Senator RUBIO, who chairs the Small Business Committee, and Senator CARPER. It has gained the support of organizations that advocate for small businesses, including the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers of Manufacturers, and the National Federation of Independent Businesses. It also has been endorsed by groups in the financial services industry, including the Texas Society of Certified Public Accountants, the American Institute of CPAs, and the Independent Bankers of Texas. Most importantly, this bill is an answer to the real concerns that businessowners are facing.

As we work to strengthen our coronavirus response and recovery, that should be the guiding principle in the Senate—figure out what is working, what isn't, and act appropriately. This is a big contrast between the approach we are seeing from our House colleagues. A few weeks ago, they passed a bill that was chock-full of ideological policy proposals they know has absolutely no chance of gaining any traction in the Senate, but they didn't seem to care. They did a driveby vote on a Friday and left town and haven't been back since.

Tax breaks for blue State millionaires—they actually want to cut taxes on the richest people in America by reducing or raising the cap on the State and local tax deduction. They want to support marijuana banking, environmental justice grants, soil health studies, changes to election laws.

Forget about solving the problem at hand. Our Democratic colleagues in the House, with this so-called Heroes Act, are attempting to use this pandemic as an opportunity to slip their liberal wish list into must-pass legislation. They are eager to stick taxpayers with another \$3 trillion tab. This isn't going to happen. It has no chance of passing in the Senate, and they actually know it.

These unwanted, unaffordable, and, frankly, laughable proposals are not the types of solutions America needs to recover from this crisis. Indeed, I think it would be wise for a number of folks in the House Democratic leadership to start listening to their constituents for a change rather than try to figure out how do you posture and position yourself favorably for the next election.

I have lost count of the number of video calls I have held—and I know my colleagues have had the same experience—with small business owners, medical professionals, farmers, educators, mayors, and representatives from nearly every corner of my State. I appreciate the countless Texans who have

shared their feedback with me to help me do a better job on their behalf and who will no doubt continue to point out the gaps that need to be filled in the months ahead, particularly when it comes to the next installment of COVID-19 legislation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOZMAN). The Senator from Florida.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 3837

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President, I rise to speak today about the growing threat of Communist China.

Xi, the General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party, is a dictator and human rights violator who is denying basic rights to the people of Hong Kong, cracking down on dissidents, militarizing the South China Sea, and imprisoning more than 1 million Uighurs in internment camps simply because of their religion.

General Secretary Xi is interested in one thing—global domination. It is time we all open our eyes. Communist China despises the freedoms Americans cherish.

The threat we face from Communist China is the new Cold War. This is a Cold War created by General Secretary Xi. It is a Cold War fought with technology, misinformation, and political persuasion. And Communist China's latest weapon of choice is the coronavirus.

Communist China lied about what they knew and spread misinformation around the world, costing hundreds of thousands of lives, millions of jobs, and creating massive economic impact.

All freedom-loving nations around the world need to come together to hold Communist China accountable and financially liable.

One thing we can do today is make sure Communist China can't steal or sabotage American COVID-19 vaccine research. We know Communist China steals U.S. research and intellectual property. We have seen this at our universities; we have seen it at our research institutions and hospitals.

U.S. officials have been warning American firms to safeguard their research against China and others known for stealing U.S. technology. The FBI and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency recently warned organizations researching COVID-19 of likely insider threats, targeting, and network compromise by Communist China.

Communist China wants to be first in vaccine development, and unlike the United States and other freedom-loving countries, Communist China will not be quick to share.

Communist China wants to be the dominant world power, and they have made clear they don't care who is harmed in the process. That is why I led my colleagues in introducing the COVID-19 Vaccine Protection Act, which will require a thorough national security evaluation and clearance by the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of State, and the Fed-

eral Bureau of Investigation of all Chinese student visa holders taking part in activities related to COVID-19 vaccine research.

We need to know who in our country is working on vaccine research so that we can make sure American efforts are protected. The United States and all Americans need to get serious about the threat from Communist China.

The COVID-19 Vaccine Protection Act is a great first step, and I look forward to all of my colleagues supporting this effort.

I am also urging everyone to buy American products. It is the single most important thing we can do to send a message to Communist China that their behavior is unacceptable.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Judiciary Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. 3837 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER is there objection?

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Mr. President, none of us in this body is naive enough not to understand the challenges the People's Republic of China represents to our country and to the world. But this bill, which threatens to further incite the tensions already tearing at the fabric of our Nation—this time targeting Asians and Asian Americans—is not the answer.

Yes, we know about how the PRC has targeted our intellectual property and sought to benefit from the research excellence and technological insights developed by our universities and our companies—all for its own scientific and military advancement, all to support an authoritarian system that is dangerous both to living within and outside its borders.

But taking advantage of this moment of fear and division in our country to stoke xenophobia and paint an entire people as guilty by association is not the right way to address this challenge. It is not the American way.

If we have specific counterintelligence threats, let's have our intelligence and law enforcement communities target the threats. I have faith and confidence in their ability to do so if provided the right leadership.

Rather than take that sort of discriminate approach, this bill just discriminates. Even setting aside that blanket moratoriums are the wrong way to deal with the situation at hand, the AAPI community is right to be suspicious that Senate Republicans aren't putting forth any bills today barring visas for nationals from our other adversaries, such as Russia. They are doing it only when it comes to China.

If we need to work more closely with our universities to make sure they un-

derstand who they are engaged with—as students, in accepting donations—then we can do so without attacking an entire group because of their ethnicity or national background but with little other basis or rationale.

We can do better. We as a nation must do better. We cannot and should not go back to the days when there were signs that said “No Irish Need Apply” or when we had quotas for different races and religions at our major universities, let alone the days of the Chinese Exclusion Act. That is not the right direction for America, and it is not the America any of us should be seeking to build.

Unfortunately, there are too many today who would rather see us fractionalized as a nation—who would rather see us divided, not united. In fact, few things would make the PRC happier than to see this sort of legislation go forward because it achieves their end.

So let's take a serious approach to the challenges that we face with the PRC, with safeguarding our universities, our intellectual property, and our scientific research. But let us also take an approach that is consistent with our values as a nation. We can do both. We can and will do better.

I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President, I appreciate my colleague's remarks. Florida and the United States are amazing melting pots, and our States and country have both benefited greatly from the contributions of people from all over the world.

This bill isn't about race. This is a commonsense bill to protect American citizens from the Government of Communist China, which has decided to become our adversary.

This is about protecting Americans from a regime that is actively trying to sabotage our efforts to create a vaccine. We have evidence from our intelligence community that China is trying to do this.

My bill would help identify who in our country is trying to steal or, more importantly, delay, sabotage our success of a vaccine, and that is Communist China's goal.

My colleague has even introduced her own resolution recognizing the importance of vaccinations and immunizations in the United States, and we all agree with her, so blocking my proposal today makes absolutely no sense. Why would my colleague not want to save American lives and make sure we have a vaccine done as quickly as possible? American lives are on the line and depend on this vaccine.

I am clearly disappointed my colleague objected to passing this bill today, but I am completely committed to working with her to get it across the finish line.

As long as our vaccine research remains vulnerable, Communist China will not hesitate to use any tool necessary to obtain this sensitive information.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maine.

H.R. 1957

Mr. KING. Mr. President, someday, 100 years from now, a family will camp on a mesa in Utah or a hillside in North Carolina or a canyon in New Mexico or they will hike the rocky coast of Maine. They will play on a ballfield in Kansas, and it will be because of the work that we are going to do this week in this Congress.

They will not know KING or DAINES or ALEXANDER or PORTMAN or WARNER or MANCHIN or GARDNER or all the others who are going to support our efforts. Our names will be long forgotten, but what we do will be benefiting this country for generations.

There are very few things we can do in our work here that are permanent. Bills can be repealed. Programs can be amended. Times change, and all can change with it.

What we are talking about this week in the Great American Outdoors Act is making a gift to our fellow Americans. Setting aside special places, setting aside opportunities for outdoors and recreation is a sacred trust, and it is one that goes back to the beginning of this country.

As I said, there is very little we can do that is permanent, but this is one of those things. It is the right thing to do, but it also makes sense from the economy's point of view in all of our States.

Acadia National Park in Maine generates more than \$300 million a year in economic activity in the surrounding communities. Our new Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument is already generating economic activity in the area where it is located. A visit to Maine to see the seacoast and the forest at those two sites would be rewarding for any family.

What we are doing today will enable families to continue to make these kinds of journeys—the next generation and the next and the next. That family will see a sunrise on the coast of Maine, a sunset on a mesa in Arizona. They will not know who it was, but they will know what we did.

In Maine there is a wonderful mountain, Mount Katahdin, the highest point in the State, and it was proposed to be set aside for the people of Maine by the Governor named Percival Baxter in the twenties, one of my predecessors.

The legislature of Maine said: No, we don't have to do that. We shouldn't really do that. Who is going to pay for the roads? We are going to take property out of the tax base. What about the trees?

There were all kinds of reasons for not doing it, so it didn't happen.

It didn't happen while Percival Baxter was Governor, but he dedicated the rest of his life to making it happen. Individually, privately, he purchased full parcels of land to assemble what is now Baxter State Park, one of the gems in this country that contains, at its cen-

ter, Mount Katahdin. He did this as one of the greatest acts of private philanthropy in the history of the United States. It was the legacy of a lifetime.

Few of us will have an opportunity to do what Baxter did, but we have that opportunity now. Where does the money come from? It comes from the people, in the sense of revenues from the use of Federal lands for mineral extraction. This is an idea that was brought forth in 1965 when the Land and Water Conservation Fund was created, and the idea was this: We are using the public's resources and assets, and, therefore, the money that flows from that should go back to the people and should go back into conservation. It is a beautifully symmetrical idea.

The problem is that the fund that was created in 1965 has been systematically looted by the Congresses in successive years. There have been only 2 years since then that it has been fully funded with the funds that are available.

Today, this week, we are going to correct that historic error and make a commitment not only to the people of the United States today but to people we don't even know—the children and grandchildren and great-grandchildren of today's citizens.

The other thing this bill will do is begin to fund the backlog of maintenance at our national parks, bureau of public lands, and other public lands across the country. This sounds pretty boring, pretty mundane, and some of my friends are going to say: Well, you can't do this. We are going to raise a budget point of order.

This is money, again, coming from excess funds in the generation of minerals, oil, and gas. But they are going to say: No, no. You can't do that.

What we are doing here is paying a debt. Deferred maintenance is a debt.

When I was Governor, I used to go to New York to kiss the ring of the rating agencies and hope and beg that they would give us a high bond rating so that our interest costs for our State debt would be low. At one point, I was making a presentation about how prudent Maine was. We didn't have much debt. We paid it off in 10 years, and we really needed this high bond rating.

One of the analysts stopped me, and he said: Governor, don't forget that if you are not maintaining your infrastructure, that is debt just as sure as if you borrow money from the bank, and it is debt that is going to have to be paid, and it is going to have to be paid in the future, which means it is going to cost more.

I had never thought of it that way, but that is what we are doing here. That is why what we are doing here is eminently fiscally responsible because we are paying off a debt, and we are preserving these wonderful, incredible places for people to visit and enjoy.

Believe me, after this spring, people really want to get outdoors. In Maine, for example, Acadia National Park has more than 3½ million visitors a year.

That is a big number. It is a really big number when you realize that more than twice the population of our whole State comes to visit this one small, beautiful, incredible spot on the coast of Maine on Mount Desert Island. So what we are talking about today is paying a debt and making a contribution to the well-being of the American people for generations to come.

When Baxter completed the acquisition of Katahdin and the area that is now Baxter State Park, he had an amazing quote that I think applies to what we are talking about today. He said:

Man is born to die. His works are short-lived. Buildings crumble, monuments decay, and wealth vanishes, but Katahdin in all its glory forever shall remain the mountain of the people of Maine.

Areas across our country in all their glory will forever be part of the legacy for the people of America.

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. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

POLICE DEPARTMENTS

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I come to the floor today at a time that you and I have heard the Democrats' latest rallying cry. Astonishingly, the rallying cry is: Defund the police. Defund the police. That is what I am hearing from Democrats all across America. This comes on the heels of a previous battle cry: Abolish ICE. That is what the Democrats are calling for today.

Leading Democrats—radical leftwing lawmakers like ALEXANDRIA OCASIO-CORTEZ—are pushing these very dangerous ideas. Let me say it again. Liberal Democrats all across the country are asking all of us to defund law enforcement in America. If we did that—if we did that—crime would go through the roof, school safety would cease to exist, and the most vulnerable in our society would have no one to turn to or call in case of an emergency. Yet Democratic mayors across the country seem to be on board.

Last week, the Democratic mayor of Los Angeles said that he plans to slash the LA Police Department's budget. New York City Mayor de Blasio has vowed to cut funding for the New York Police Department. The Minneapolis City Council announced Sunday that it would vote to disband—disband—the city's police department and said they had a veto-proof majority.

House Democrats have now just released a new bill that supposedly seeks police reform. This is from a party that just last month pushed a trillion dollar—the total bill was \$3 trillion for the Heroes fund to support the police. Well, now funding for police has purposely been left out of the bill.

As our economy begins to recover—and I will tell you the jobs numbers are very promising—we need to make sure that our communities are safe. This starts at the local level with Governors and mayors in cities like Minneapolis and New York and Los Angeles.

Last week, the Wall Street Journal had an editorial that was titled “Liberal Cities, Radical Mayhem.” Democratic mayors and Governors seem unable to stop the lawlessness. It included a warning. It said:

This isn't merely about damage to property. It's about destroying the order required for city life.

They went on to say:

Non-criminals are afraid to go into these cities in order to make a living.

Now you have seen New York Governor Cuomo blaming Mayor de Blasio, as well as the New York Police Department, for failing to stop the violence in New York City. The Manhattan Institute says that the riots likely caused New York businesses tens of millions of dollars last week alone. This is in damages.

Nationwide, at least 12 people have been killed in the riots last week, including police officers. The rioters have committed many acts of violence against police officers, as well as against innocent bystanders. In New York City alone, 292 officers have been injured last week. One New York police officer was stabbed in the neck, and two others were shot last Wednesday night in Brooklyn. In Los Angeles, 27 officers were injured during just one night of rioting. One officer suffered a fractured skull and another a broken knee.

On Thursday, Attorney General Bill Barr gave a briefing on the administration's efforts to end the violence. The Attorney General also said that President Trump has directed him to spare no effort in seeking justice in the George Floyd case.

The State has filed criminal charges against the four officers, and Federal authorities are investigating civil rights violations. The Attorney General is claiming and now has said that there is clear evidence that extremist groups like antifa were inciting the riots. The lawlessness, he said, must and will stop.

Our free society depends on the rule of law, and the Attorney General has said that the rule of law will prevail. We need to continue to focus on social, economic, educational, and police reforms. Still, no sensible reform involves defunding the police. Police are civil servants. Their job is difficult, and their job is dangerous.

They may need more resources, not fewer, as Democrats across the country are calling for defunding. I am saying they may need more. They may need more training. They may need more resources for body cameras. They may need more resources to help recruit officers who match their communities.

There is much more that needs to be done, and defunding is not part of it.

We can never abandon those who protect us.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASIDY). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. RUBIO. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

RACISM

Mr. RUBIO. The murder of Mr. Floyd at the hands of law enforcement officers was an outrageous crime that has shocked this Nation, but it would be a mistake to conclude that the unrest of the last 2 weeks are only about his death or are only about relations with the police.

At its core, what this unrest is about is the question of what kind of society we are and what kind of society do we want to be.

A society is a voluntary agreement, by people, to live together. For a society to thrive, those in it must believe that their interests are protected and their voices are heard, but when a substantial number of people in a society come to believe that they are not valued; that they do not matter; or that they are not wanted, then that society will have big problems.

For decades, African Americans have complained that they feel their voices are being ignored, their problems not being addressed, and their lives not valued.

Given our Nation's history with race, this is an uncomfortable grievance—one many would rather avoid. Like a bad debt that must eventually be paid, it is a grievance we can no longer ignore.

Like before, the latest unrest has given rise to voices arguing that the foundations of our Republic are built on systemic racism and must, therefore, be brought down. The only difference is that, this time, claims like these don't just come from the fringes of our politics. Like before, we also have voices that say that, today, race is only a factor in individual cases, distinct from our society at large. Both of these views are wrong.

The foundations of our country are not irredeemably racist. Abolition, women's suffrage, desegregation, the civil rights movement—these were not appeals to overthrow our values; these were demands that we fulfill them.

The Constitution that once considered slaves three-fifths of a human being was ultimately the vehicle that was used to free them and, eventually, to secure their most basic rights.

It is also true that we have made tremendous progress on racial equality over the last 50 years, but there remain shocking racial disparities on health, on education, on housing, on economics, and on criminal justice, and there remains the fundamental truth that any society in which a substantial per-

centage of the people believe that they are treated unjustly is a society that has a problem, a society that can never fulfill its full potential unless those grievances are addressed.

None of this excuses radical, violent extremists setting fires, looting buildings, and hurting innocent people, but it also shouldn't lead us to stupid ideas like defunding the police.

And this is not going to be fixed by endless emails from corporation after corporation trying to prove how woke they are, even as they outsource your job to China.

It is also not going to be fixed by pretending that race is no longer an issue and by accusing everyone who disagrees and says it is of hating America. Yes, there are still vile racists among us, although few of them will ever openly admit it, but in 21st century America, few people consider themselves racist.

The primary reason why race remains relevant today is that the African-American community faces a unique set of challenges that far too few people in positions of power and politics fully understand.

If a child is raised in a stable home, in a safe neighborhood, attends a good school, and they have a private tutor to help them with the SAT, while another child 2 miles away is raised by one parent, or maybe even a grandparent, they live in substandard housing, in a dangerous neighborhood, they attend a school that is failing, or failing them, and they don't have a private tutor for the SAT—on most days they don't have access to Wi-Fi—do these two kids really have an equal opportunity to go to the same college?

If one college student has the connections or the money to do unpaid internships in the summer or to study abroad and another student has to work in the summer just so they can afford to go back to school in the fall, do they really have an equal opportunity to get hired when they graduate?

If one young adult does something stupid and gets arrested, but his parents hire good lawyers, and he is able to avoid having a criminal record, but another young adult who does the exact same thing has to use a public defender, pleads guilty to a lesser charge but now has a criminal record, do they really have an equal opportunity when they apply for the same job?

When policymakers encourage sending manufacturing jobs that once employed African-American men overseas in an effort to benefit those employed in technology and finance, how can we truly expect widespread prosperity for all Americans?

When a disproportionate number of those with these disadvantages comes from one race while a disproportionate number of those with the advantages comes from another, the result is a racial disparity.

Some suggest that these disparities are the result of institutionalized racism or of a deliberate effort designed to harm African Americans.

What I truly believe is that it is the product of something far less sinister but sometimes equally damaging. It is the result of racial indifference, of the fact that many in positions of power and influence are oblivious—are unaware—of the unique challenges that disproportionately face African-American communities across this country.

We must now acknowledge these challenges and address these disparities that they create because, when disparities go unaddressed, they become grievances. When grievances are ignored, it leads to friction and division and, ultimately, unrest.

By no means do these disparities alone fully capture the entirety of the challenge before us. There still remain points of friction, more reminiscent of a different and shameful era in our history.

Here, too, we can also suffer from indifference because the vast majority of Americans simply do not personally know the sting that comes from implicit and sometimes explicit reactions to the color of your skin, which is why true progress requires that we listen to the viewpoints of those who do.

Listen to the young man I know who sees reports of a young man who looks like him—like his uncles, like his grandfather—being murdered by vigilantes in a case of mistaken identity. Who knows, had they had not taken video of themselves doing this, they would have gotten away with it.

Listen, and he will tell you that he feels his life wouldn't matter either if it wasn't because he played professional football.

Listen to the police officer I know who was pulled over while off duty at least seven times by his own department for no reason, and he will tell you of the humiliation of having to explain this to his teenage son.

Listen to what it feels like to see on the news that, when a mother in Miami recently drowned her own autistic son in a terrible tragedy—do you know how she tried to cover it up? By falsely telling the police that he had been abducted by two African-American men demanding drugs.

Listen to what it feels like to read about the indictment of the chief of police of Biscayne Park, FL, who, in an effort to brag about having a perfect crime-solving record, ordered his officers to arrest anybody Black walking through their streets and, if they had any kind of criminal record, pin one of their unsolved crimes on them.

Listen not because it is your fault, not because you are to blame; listen because this is what people who want to live together in harmony must do.

This is the respect we owe one another as colleagues, as coworkers. This is the empathy that is required of us as neighbors, as friends, and as children of the same God.

This may not be your fault, but this is our problem because, until we heal this divide, we will never ever have the kind of society we want, and we will never fulfill the full promise of our Nation.

There is reason for hope, even in a deeply divided country where the political and cultural lines that divide us continue to harden.

A clear consensus has emerged that we can no longer ignore matters of race in America, but it is a fragile consensus, already being tested by loud voices appealing to our most basic fears or those who see the opportunity to advance divisiveness and extreme ideas.

If this is the path we choose, we will all look back at this time with profound regret, and we will be left with a society that is even angrier and more divided than it is now. We will be left with an America that no longer resembles the one we honor when we stand during the National Anthem.

Ironically, we will ultimately be left with an America even further away from the one some kneel to demand.

The only way forward is to treat each other with the empathy and respect required of the people who have decided to share a nation and a future.

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. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

H.R. 1957

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, I am here tonight on the floor to talk about a historic opportunity for our country and for our national parks—a true treasure of this country. When Teddy Roosevelt started the national parks, he wanted to preserve some of the most beautiful, pristine lands in America for public use.

It was a good decision. Now we have 84 million acres of parkland all around the country. Some of them are historical parks, battlefields, or Presidents' homes. Some of them are like Yosemite or Yellowstone. The Tetons are known as spectacular, beautiful vistas. Others, like Cuyahoga Valley National Park in Ohio, are really suburban parks. It sits between Cleveland and Akron, OH. It is the 13th most visited park in the United States of America. It is a fantastic park—for fishing, for hiking, for bicycling, for going on a scenic railroad.

People love the parks. There is a good reason for that—because they are spectacular. In fact, visitation at the parks is up. During the 10 years just before the park centennial, which was in 2016, we had about a \$58 million increase in visitors to our national parks.

As the coronavirus begins to fade—thank goodness—more and more people

are wanting to be outside, do things with their family, do something that is not expensive but is fun and healthy. Our national parks are the perfect place. As our parks begin to reopen, we are going to get more and more visitors to those parks.

The problem is, when they go to these parks, they are going to find that there are some issues. These issues are that our national parks over the years have not kept up with their maintenance, with the basics of what you would expect in any organization—the water systems, the roads, the bridges, the bathrooms, the visitor centers, the trails. Many of these are now closed in some of our parks because they haven't had the funding to do the capital improvements, the things you would think about in deferred maintenance at your home. For instance, if your roof starts to leak, you want to fix it because if you don't, then your wall begins to get moldy or your floor begins to couple. That is what is happening in our national parks.

Not only has Congress not provided the money for these more expensive infrastructure changes in our parks, but that has caused additional damage. Every day it is causing more and more damage. It is the biggest challenge we have in the parks.

I was a member of what is called the Centennial Commission for the national parks, which is a private sector group that was formed when I was not in public office a few years ago, and it was working up to the 2016 centennial. The top issue was this deferred maintenance.

I have been on the Energy and Natural Resources Committee and have been passing legislation related to the parks. The Centennial Act we passed in 2016. That was very important because it provided more funding for the parks.

Frankly, we could not come up with enough money through the appropriations process to deal with these long-term problems. Why? Because they are so expensive. In the parks, it is believed there is now a \$12.5 billion shortfall—a \$12.5 billion deferred maintenance project.

We fund the parks every year, but we fund them for the rangers, for the naturalist programs. We fund some of the good work that is being done with schoolchildren and so on, but these big expenditures, like a new road or a new bridge or, in the case of Cuyahoga Valley National Park, a new railway system because the rails themselves need to be improved and replaced—those things are too doggone expensive for annual appropriations.

Several years ago, some of us came up with an idea of providing more public-private partnerships with the parks. The Centennial Act, which I authored, does that. In fact, we have been able to provide a match of greater than 1 to 1 for money that is put into what is called our Centennial Challenge Fund.

The money goes in from the Federal Government, and it has been matched

more than 1 to 1 by private sector money. That is helpful, but it cannot again handle these huge expenditures.

Another idea—Senator MARK WARNER of Virginia actually came to me on this several years ago and said: Why don't we take some of the revenue that is coming from our oil and gas and other energy projects that are on Federal land, both onshore and offshore, and take some of those royalties—the revenue the Federal Government derives from that, which is not going to another purpose—and say that a part of those revenues, not all but a part of it, should be focused on this issue of infrastructure, of this deferred maintenance, that is growing and growing in our parks and getting more expensive every year if we don't fix it.

I love that idea because that is exactly what the oil and gas revenue money ought to be used for—to help in terms of our natural resources. It is not everything. The \$12.5 billion has about \$6 billion of immediate projects that need to be handled right away. These are the priority projects. Those are the ones we focus on. For the next 5 years, in our legislation, we are requiring that enough of those resources from the royalties come in to handle that \$6 billion, assuming that the royalties are there. Right now, the cost of oil is so low that it would be tough to meet that. We think, over time, that will even out, and we will have enough. If there is not, then the money will not be there, but if it is, the money will be there to do exactly what we ought to do, which is, in the end, to save taxpayers' money by fixing some of these problems before they get worse.

Some people say: Well, it is better to do it with an annual appropriations in Congress. I would say to that, in many respects, this funding for our park is a debt unpaid. In other words, it is money that we should have been paying all along to keep up with the roads, the bridges, the buildings, the railway systems, the seawalls—which I will talk about in a minute—but we haven't. We have allowed this to build up.

In a way, this is a debt that is on our books that we have to deal with. Think about it in your family or in your business, if you allow these deferred maintenance problems to continue to grow, you end up having additional costs. We need to take care of it. This is a great way to do it, taking these revenues and applying it to these immediate problems.

By the way, there was a lot of discussion in Congress over the years about shovel-ready projects. When you do infrastructure spending, you want it to be shovel-ready. These are shovel-ready because they have been vetted. We require the Park Service to provide us every year what their infrastructure needs are, what their priority infrastructure needs are and to rank them.

For every single national park property in America, we know what it is. As an example, this is the William

Howard Taft birthplace in my hometown of Cincinnati, Ohio. As you can see, the ceiling is leaking. What happens is, the ceiling leaks. And then, the walls are getting damaged, the floor is getting damaged, and some beautiful furniture from the Taft era is getting damaged. We need to fix it. It is a big expense. It is the entire roof that has to be repaired.

Their annual budget is not nearly enough to do that. They have an annual budget. It takes care of a few park rangers who are naturalists and interpreters. They have a lot of school kids who come through, as an example, and others who want to see the history of William Howard Taft's upbringing, who was a Chief Justice as well as President of the United States. There is no way the annual appropriation from Congress able to do something like that. It needs these additional resources.

Here we are at the Cuyahoga National Valley National Park. This is one of the buildings. As you can see, it is not in great repair. They don't have money to take it down and not enough money to repair these kind of buildings. All they want to do with this building, by the way, is to take it down. It is a hazard. As you can imagine, it is attracting crime and drug use and other issues. They have several buildings like that.

Here is another one. This is the railway I talked about at the Cuyahoga Valley National Park. I am here with the park director. This ranger is a guy who has been all around the country. He told me that in every single one of our parks, he has had to work through this issue. How do you take our budget and make sure you have the rangers, have the naturalist programs, and keep things in order but then don't have enough to pay for these big expenses?

We are right near a bridge here that is also falling down. When the bridge is falling down, the people will not be able to access the trail and the bike trail. It is a big expense. You have to do it.

Here I am at the Perry Monument. This is on Lake Erie. For those of you who have been to Put-in-Bay, you know it is a great place to go. The Perry Monument is awesome. It not only talks about William Perry and his history and legacy but the War of 1812 and all of the veterans of that war and the relationship now between Canada and the United States and the UK, now being our great allies. That was not always so. The War of 1812 was essential for the United States and something as part of a historical park to be remembered.

The seawall that protects that memorial is crumbling. The seawalls don't last forever. This one is not lasting forever, particularly as the Lake Erie water level is increasing. You can see that not only is the seawall crumbling, but there are potholes behind me that cause sinkholes, they call them. People are not allowed to go out on the lakefront here in many places because of

that. That is a huge expense to do a seawall. They have to do it to protect the monument itself. The visitor center there is not ADA compatible, the Americans with Disabilities Act. They need funding to do that, which is a major expense.

These are the kinds of things we are talking about. This is not just my home State of Ohio. This is about \$100 million that needs to come out of this fund just for the State of Ohio.

Again, there are other States that have bigger national parks and more needs and more infrastructure and more roads and bridges that need help, but for us this is really important. We have to be sure that we are protecting this incredible treasure from future generations.

That is what this legislation is about. It is going to be on the floor this week and voted on as part of the Great American Outdoors Act, which includes, also, money for the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

I will say, with regard to the national park funding, this funding is directed at stewardship. In other words, not a single penny of the money we are talking about with Restore Our Parks Act that I have been describing can go to expansion of a park—not one penny. All of it has to go toward restoring the parks, toward stewardship of the parks.

I think that is important because whether you are a Republican or a Democrat, I think you should agree that to the extent we have these parks and have this land, we need to take better care of them. It is our responsibility. We are the stewards. Our generation is the steward for future generations. We have not done it. This is an opportunity to right that wrong. We need to get back on track.

My hope is that we will continue to see support for this on both sides of the aisle, both sides of the Capitol. It is really important. We saw on Monday night there was a first trial vote to be able to proceed to the debate on this bill. That vote was overwhelming—80 Senators voted for it out of 100. That is unusual around here. That shows, again, the bipartisan nature of this and the fact that this is carefully thought out. We spent a lot of time on it. We got it out of committee not once but a couple of times. We have done a lot of research on it. We made sure the parks are providing us with good data to know what these projects are, what are their highest priorities.

There is a lot of discussion in this Chamber about putting more money into infrastructure, and maybe that will be done as part of the next legislation. They have been talking about it, in terms of the next stimulus package, to have infrastructure funding. Whether it is rural broadband or whether it is our ports or our roads or our bridges, I think there is an opportunity there. If you put a dollar in, you get more than a dollar back if you do the right kind of smart economic infrastructure.

There are two problems with it. One, often it is not merit-based if Congress

does it. Remember the Bridge to Nowhere years ago where there was a bridge in Alaska that didn't go anywhere, but we were going to pay millions of dollars for it. These are not "bridges to nowhere." These projects have all been vetted. It is a merit-based process.

Second, sometimes they just aren't shovel-ready. In other words, the priority is to fix something, but you don't have the permits; you don't have the approval. These are on national park lands. They have the approval. They are ready to go. They are shovel-ready. They are merit-based.

Discussion around here often about infrastructure is not to pay for it with an offset but rather—because infrastructure spending returns capital, which it does if it is done properly. This would return a lot because this is stuff that is going to involve more visitors, more revenue being raised—through people coming to the parks and attendance at the parks—for the communities, certainly, that the parks are in but even for the parks themselves. We are talking often about not paying for it. Here, we actually do have it paid for. It is not a traditional pay-for—I acknowledge that—but it is funding that comes from the royalties, again, from offshore and onshore oil and gas and other energy projects that goes into fixing our national parks. It is our responsibility as stewards to do that.

My hope is that what we will see tomorrow and the next day and maybe into next week, depending on how long people want to debate this, is that we can continue to have the support we saw on Monday night for our parks. It is one of the true treasures of our country. It is a great asset that if we don't fix it, it will not be there for future generations because these things—once they start to crumble, once the seawall is gone, the monument is gone. When you have a situation where bathrooms are closed or trails are closed, people are going to show up and be, understandably, disappointed that the U.S. Congress did not take advantage of this opportunity if we do not vote for this to be able to fix the parks for future generations.

Finally, I would like to thank not just my colleague Senator WARNER, whom I talked about earlier, who has been a champion on this issue, but also Senator LAMAR ALEXANDER and Senator ANGUS KING. Senator ALEXANDER has been involved in these issues for many years. Back in the Reagan administration, he was on another Commission. I mentioned the Centennial Commission for the parks. He was on another Commission for the great outdoors, which recommended dealing with this issue. Again, it has been the top issue for our national parks.

If we can pass this legislation—\$6.5 billion over the next 5 years for our national parks—this will truly be historic. This is, in a sense, a Teddy Roosevelt moment for us, in this genera-

tion, our generation, to be able to right the wrongs and fix the problems and get our parks back on track so they will be there for future generations.

I also want to thank the President of the United States and his Cabinet because they have been helpful in this—the Secretary of the Interior, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget. President Trump himself actually increased the size of this program by saying: Let's not just include our national parks; let's also include our national wildlife; let's include our national forests.

This is even a broader program than just national parks now. This is really important. It was in the President's budget each of the last 3 years, and I appreciate that. That gives us a chance to talk about how to get this not just through the Senate and through the House but actually signed into law because the President is prepared to sign it if we can get our work done here.

I hope my colleagues will do again what they did on Monday night—recognize that this is an important initiative at a time when our country is once again polarized. We have plenty of issues between the coronavirus and what is happening on the streets. Isn't it good to see something that can bring our country, our Senate, our House, and our President together to do something that is important for future generations?

I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

REMEMBERING LARRY WALSH

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, this week, my State of Illinois is saying a fond and final farewell to a deeply loved and respected public servant, Larry Walsh. He devoted 50 years of his life to serving, as he called them, the folks back home. He won his first election to the local school board in 1970 at the age of 21.

He served in local and county government positions and in the Illinois State Senate. For the last 16 years, Larry was county executive for Will County, the fourth largest county in my State of Illinois and one of the fastest growing.

Larry Walsh was as good at retail politics as anybody I have ever seen. He loved politics and he loved people and it showed. People loved him back. Democrats, Republicans, farmers, city folk—they all loved Larry.

He was one of the longest serving county executives in Will County history. When he announced last August that he would not run for a fifth term as executive because the cancer he was battling for 5 years was gaining the upper hand, there was hardly a dry eye in the room. Everyone with whom he had worked was saddened by that announcement.

He said at that press conference: "I've been a very blessed man and a very lucky man."

From where I am sitting, I think the really lucky ones were Larry's folks

back home. Also lucky were those who worked with him and called him a friend. I am honored to count myself among them.

Lawrence Michael Walsh, born on a farm in Elwood, IL, about 10 miles outside of Joliet. He was the second of eight children. His parents were farmers, as were his grandparents and great-grandparents. He carried on that family tradition. Farming was in his blood.

He won his first election to the school board about 3 weeks before his first child was born. Three years later, he was elected to the local board of supervisors. He was elected to the Will County board in 1974 and again in 1992.

From 1997, until the year 2005, Larry served in the Illinois State Senate in Springfield. His Senate district—the 43rd—included most of Will County, parts of Kankakee and Iroquois Counties.

There were cities, suburbs, and farms. In Springfield, he sat in the back row of the chamber. He became good friends of another senator who sat in the seat right next to him.

To some, it was an amazingly odd couple to see the two of them, Larry the farmer and conservative Democrat and his seatmate, a very liberal, left-leaning lawyer from Hyde Park in the city of Chicago.

Both men had an ability that is all too rare in today's brand of politics. They could see beyond labels. They were both passionate about building coalitions and finding common ground, and they both liked a good game of poker. So they became good friends.

In 2004, when his friend decided to run for the U.S. Senate, Larry Walsh was the first Senator to endorse him. Larry took his seatmate to meet the farmers and other folks in small towns in Will and Kankakee Iroquois counties.

Four years later, that seatmate of his was elected President of the United States, and Larry Walsh was right here in Washington to see Barack Obama inaugurated as the leader of our great Nation.

Larry Walsh was a fine and decent man. He was thoughtful and witty, loyal and trustworthy. He seemed to radiate joy, and his joy would fill a room. He was grounded in reality and modest. He had a big booming voice—you couldn't miss it—and you sure as heck could not miss his laugh, and there were plenty of them.

His friends included a President, Cabinet members and Governors and men and women who swept the floors in his offices.

In 2007, Will County Democrats created a new award to honor those working to promote progress and the common good. They named the award after the man who exemplified those qualities—the Larry Walsh Lifetime Achievement Award.

Well, fittingly, the first recipient of the Larry Walsh Lifetime Achievement Award was Larry Walsh. I laughed

about that so many times and never let him forget it. Every time he visited my office, I would remind him that he was the first recipient of the Larry Walsh Award.

Larry's admirers transcended party labels. George Pearson, chairman of the Will County Republican Party, told a reporter that Larry "greeted me each time we met with a handshake, a smile and a pat on the shoulder. You would never have known we were on opposite sides of the political aisle, and that is what made Larry popular with Will County residents."

The other thing that made Larry Walsh so popular with the people of his county was that he was just incredibly good at his job.

As county executive, Larry worked hard to professionalize and modernize county government and make it more responsive. He built a strong financial foundation for this great county, which improved its bond rating and enabled him to lead the largest capital improvement program in the history of the county. The county built new roads and bridges, a new public safety complex, new county health facilities, and a new courthouse scheduled to open in October.

In the Illinois State Senate, he was instrumental in, among others things, developing the Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery in Elwood; the redevelopment of the Joliet Arsenal into a modern intermodal freight terminal, the CenterPoint Intermodal Center; and the designation of the Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie—the first national tallgrass prairie in the United States.

There was a time when we thought it was the end of the world for Will County when Joliet Arsenal was given up by the Federal Government, but thanks to Larry Walsh and his buddy George Sangmeister and many others, it became a showpiece for the rest of the United States to see how this piece of Federal real estate had a bright, bright future.

Larry was most proud of his family. My wife Loretta and I offer our deepest condolences to Irene, Larry's wife of 50 years, and the love of his life. I called her on the phone just the other day when Larry passed, and we talked about the rough period toward the end of his life, but we knew it was coming. Today, we look back on it as a moment of trial that he endured until that moment when he left and left behind not only that love of his life Irene but their daughter Sarah, their five sons, Larry Jr. and Shawn—both of whom followed dad into public service—Frank, Matthew, and Brian and 20 grandkids. He was so proud of every single one of them.

Because of the pandemic, the sendoff for Larry is going to be much smaller than it would have been in Will County. There will be visitation from 2 to 8 on Thursday, followed by a private funeral mass on Friday, and local folks are expected to line the route from the church to the cemetery.

A couple of final thoughts about my friend Larry: He was a bridge builder. He had inexhaustible patience when it came to searching for common ground in order to make government work and solve big problems. Don't we need more leaders like him today?

Larry loved life. Every Christmas season, for years, the local theater company in Joliet put on a stage production of that classic movie "It's a Wonderful Life." The show was always broadcast on a local radio station, and for many years, right up to this last Christmas, Larry Walsh played the part of Clarence. You will remember Clarence at the end of the movie. He was the guardian angel. Clarence was always hoping to earn his wings. Clarence was assigned to watch over George Bailey, who is so despondent one Christmas Eve he is thinking about jumping off a bridge. Clarence the guardian angel's assignment was to get George to change his mind.

Clarence did that by showing George how much the people in his hometown would have missed had George not been part of their lives. Clarence tells George:

Strange, isn't it? Each man's life touches so many other lives. When he isn't around, he leaves an awful hole, doesn't he?

Many of us are feeling an awful hole today with the passing of Larry Walsh—this good man and devoted public servant.

Even though we can't schedule the kind of Irish wake that Larry so richly deserved, there is something we can do.

Besides his family, his faith, his community and public service, there was something that Larry was also fond of. After a hard day of work, Larry was known to enjoy a Pabst Blue Ribbon beer. In his honor, if you are so inclined, may we raise a PBR to Larry and a life well lived, and may we resolve to fill the hole he has left by following his uncommon example.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

Mr. President, this past weekend, I went back to Illinois and visited with two different groups—one on Friday, another on Saturday. They were young African Americans on the South Side of Chicago and in my hometown of Springfield.

I wanted to sit down with these young people, some just barely high school students, who had been engaged in protests and demonstrations in their hometowns and ask them what it was about, what it meant to them. I wanted to hear it firsthand.

They talked about the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis and how it changed the conversation about justice in America, and it moved them to stand up and speak up.

I am proud to say that those I met with have engaged in peaceful demonstrations consistent with American values and our Constitution.

I am proud of them because there were no distractions. They were focused on Black Lives Matter and true justice in America.

When we met, I asked questions of some of them. I wanted to know a little bit more about them and their lives and what brought them to this moment.

I asked each of them about the conversation—you know, that conversation when young people are called in by their parents and warned about the perils and challenges of being Black in America.

One young woman remembered her mother cautioning her to always ask for a receipt with every purchase to prove, if ever challenged, that the item had not been shoplifted. Many talked about hairstyles and clothing that they learned to be dangerous in the eyes of some White Americans.

They were even warned about the danger of any contact with the police and how their tone of voice and every move had to be carefully considered—every one of them.

Every one of them remembered the first time they were called the "N" word.

That graphic video of the last moments of George Floyd's life, when he was pleading "I can't breathe" and the cold stare of the policeman, with his knee on George Floyd's neck, ignoring the pleas for mercy—those images touched the conscience of America and the world, and these young people were touched by it.

They know and we all know, sadly, that what happened to George Floyd was not an exception.

Since 2015, the Washington Post has been following the number of people shot and killed by police. Through 2019, the total number has hovered near 1,000 annually. Ninety-four percent of the victims were armed.

The Post reports:

The number of black and unarmed people fatally shot by police has declined since 2015, but whether armed or not, black people are shot and killed at a disproportionately higher rate than white people.

They note in their newspaper this morning the death rate by race in unarmed shootings was 7.3 percent for Whites, 10.7 percent for Hispanics, and 30.3 percent for Blacks.

The anger and pain that we have seen on the streets in recent days is a reflection of generations of trauma. People are fed up with racism that has led to this injustice, and many of these young people leading this protest are determined not to live in its shadow any longer.

There are hundreds of thousands of police officers in our Nation. Most will never use their firearms. Many who do must make split-second, life-or-death decisions. I know many of them personally. I believe the ones I know are professional and humane.

If we are honest, we know that within their ranks are police officers who do not have the training or temperament to be entrusted with the authority and power they have been given. We need an honest conversation with police chiefs and law enforcement leaders

on inherent bias, use of force, training and accountability for unjust actions.

Prosecutors and judges need to join us in the pursuit of real justice, and legislators like myself need to undo the damage of a criminal justice system fraught with racial disparity.

The Obama Task Force on 21st Century Policing released a report in 2015 to strengthen community policing and restore trust between law enforcement and the communities they serve. The Trump administration shelved this effort in 2017. It is time to take it off the shelf.

This week, I join Senators BOOKER and HARRIS in cosponsoring the Justice in Policing Act of 2020—a comprehensive approach to bring accountability to policing, change methods and practices, and build trust. It draws the line on odious police practices and sets goals and standards for recruitment, training, and retraining.

Even that is not enough. Justice in America requires more than improving law enforcement. We cannot put racism behind us until we invest in opportunities for quality education, medical care that meets the highest standards, jobs with livable wages, opportunities, and safe affordable housing.

The young people I met with want an America that is more just. Let them lead us into a future where we can all breathe more easily.

I held hearings on race in America when I was chairman of the Subcommittee on the Constitution and Civil Rights—one in December of 2014. The hearing was held just a month after the death of Tamir Rice, a 12-year-old boy shot and killed by a police officer in Cleveland while he played with a toy gun.

I said then, and, sadly, I must repeat today, when unarmed African-American men and boys are killed in our streets, there is much work to be done to find justice in America.

This followed a hearing I had held the previous year where we heard heartbreaking testimony from Sybrina Fulton, the mother of Trayvon Martin, and LUCY MCBATH, the mother of Jordan Davis. LUCY has been elected to the U.S. House of Representatives from Georgia since.

Both of these innocent young Black men were gunned down by violent White vigilantes.

Now we again grieve the lives of two Black men and a Black woman—lives cut far too short in incidents of inexplicable and inexcusable violence—Ahmaud Arbery out for a jog; Breonna Taylor at home in her bedroom; and George Floyd on a curbside in Minneapolis.

Once again, those gut-wrenching words “I can’t breathe” bring tears to our eyes. How many more names of Black men, women, and children will we cry out in protest before things change? We need to have an honest American conversation with law enforcement officers about training, inherent bias, use of force, and con-

sequences for wrongdoing. We need to prohibit police misconduct that is discriminatory and deadly. We must recruit and train the next generation of law enforcement to protect and serve everyone in America. We need to invest in social services instead of expecting law enforcement to intervene in crisis situations that they are not equipped to deal with.

This will require us—Senators, other legislators—to continue to undo the damage of a criminal justice system that is unfair, in many respects—most importantly, require those of us with privilege and power to step back and listen to African Americans affected by pervasive, systemic racism.

What can we do? A good place to start is President Obama’s task force. As I mentioned earlier, it was that administration’s response to deal with community policing and trust in the community. It was shelved by the Trump administration, and I think it would be a good start—a bipartisan start—for the Trump administration to bring it down from the shelf and start a conversation.

We have an important role to play right here in Congress. Unfortunately, since Republicans took the Senate majority in January 2015, the Senate Judiciary Committee has rarely addressed issues of racism in our Nation.

The last hearing on policing in the Judiciary Committee was actually 5 years ago—November 2015—chaired by the junior Senator from Texas. It was entitled “The War on Police: How the Federal Government Undermines State and Local Law Enforcement.” It was a thinly veiled attack on the efforts of the Obama administration’s Civil Rights Division.

The Senate Judiciary Committee chairman, LINDSEY GRAHAM, has announced the Senate will hold a hearing on police misconduct next week. I was glad to hear it. I hope it is not just one and done. We need multiple hearings—long overdue.

It is critical that we also hear from Attorney General William Barr. We need to know whether the Justice Department will revive the efforts of the Obama administration to address police misconduct, and we need answers about what happened at Lafayette Square last week—right outside the White House, when the Attorney General reportedly ordered Federal law enforcement to clear peaceful demonstrators. They used rubber bullets and some form of gas. The Attorney General insists it wasn’t tear gas, but I have seen it, and it looks like some sort of a gas spray designed to push the demonstrators away.

Hearings aren’t enough. We need to do something the Senate rarely does anymore—pass a law. How about that? We need legislation on this subject, not lamentation.

I am proud to join Senators CORY BOOKER and KAMALA HARRIS in introducing this Justice in Policing Act. Our bill includes the End Racial

Profiling Act—legislation I have cosponsored for many years, finally prohibiting the scourge of racial profiling.

In 2012, I held a hearing on this bill to end racial profiling. This was the only hearing that the Senate has held on racial profiling in 20 years.

Our bill would ban choke holds—like the one that killed George Floyd. It will ban no-knock warrants—like the one that led to the death of Breonna Taylor.

In 2014, many Americans were shocked to see tanks rolling through the streets of Ferguson, MO. Shortly afterward, I held a hearing in the same subcommittee where we heard compelling testimony about the shocking reality that local police departments all over the country are armed to the teeth with billions of dollars of military surplus equipment.

Our bill will limit the transfer of military-grade equipment to State and local police so the weapons of war do not become commonplace in the streets of America.

The Justice in Policing Act also requires the use of dashboard cameras and body cameras for Federal officers, State, and local law enforcement.

Our bill establishes a National Police Misconduct Registry to prevent officers who have engaged in misconduct from simply moving to another department without accountability. It will ensure that individuals whose constitutional rights are violated by police officers can recover in court.

After the Civil War, the Congress passed the Civil Rights Act of 1871 to ensure that any person acting in official capacity who deprives another of a constitutional or legal right can be held liable in court. However, judges have strictly limited the use of this statute to recover damages for police misconduct by creating what is known as qualified immunity for police officers.

The Justice in Policing Act will end this. This is a doctrine created by judges and never approved by Congress.

I call on Senator MCCONNELL to do more than just join in speeches about George Floyd. I call on him to bring the Justice in Policing Act to the floor of the Senate as soon as possible.

Wouldn’t it be amazing, with all the protestations and all of the statements made by all of the people in the streets, by representatives in this administration from the Department of Justice who came before our committee today, and each and every one standing up and saying they are concerned about George Floyd, if we in the U.S. Senate actually considered a bill on the subject—actually considered passing a law on this matter?

We owe it not just to the Senate, we owe it to George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, to Ahmaud Arbery, and all of the Black and Brown lives we have lost in these brutal acts of racial injustice.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. MCSALLY). The Senator from Alaska.

H.R. 1957

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, last night, I had the opportunity to join probably more than 80 of my colleagues in voting for a motion to proceed to S. 3422, the Great American Outdoors Act.

This bill is sponsored by a strong group of Senators here—Senator GARDNER of Colorado, Senator DAINES of Montana, and Senator MANCHIN have been working very hard on the LWCF piece.

Senator ALEXANDER, Senator PORTMAN, and Senator WARNER are working on the parks' deferred maintenance aspect of this measure. There has been lot of work from a lot of Members and a lot of good thought that has gone into it and some good policy behind it, but I would like to share with colleagues some of the reservations I have, albeit this is good policy, solid policy in so many areas.

As with much of everything that we can do on the Senate floor, we can always seek to improve. With some of my colleagues, I think we have some ideas in areas where we can improve our Great American Outdoors Act.

I come from a State where we know a little bit about our great outdoors. I know we all like to advertise our scenery, the wildlife that we have, but back in Alaska we have some pretty unrivaled scenery. We have the mountains. We have got the glaciers. We have some of our State's most important natural features that have been conserved in some world-famous national parks, from Katmai and Denali to the Kenai Fjords, Wrangell-St. Elias, Glacier Bay—names that so many Americans know and have visited or hope to one day visit before they die.

We actually had an advertising campaign: See these majestic landscapes before you die.

Americans recognize the importance of preserving our very best lands and making the most of our ability to experience their natural splendor. We are not welcoming visitors this year in a very different time, as we are dealing with COVID, but we have no doubt that the tourism industry will be back. It will be back better than ever before. In fact, in yet another advertising campaign, we remind people that Alaska waits for you, and we would welcome you at any time.

We have more than 223 million acres of Federal lands in total. Included within that are more than 76 million acres that are managed by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, more than 71 million acres managed by the Bureau of Land Management, more than 52 million acres managed by the National Park Service, and more than 22 million acres managed by the Forest Service.

So we have a lot. We have a lot of Federal land, and that means that the Federal Government has a major responsibility to help us maintain it and preserve it, just like in every State.

So I would like to take a few minutes to discuss how the policy that we will be considering can help us do just that.

The Great American Outdoors Act combines two bills, again, that we reported from the Energy and Natural Resources Committee last year. The first one is S. 500, the Restore Our Parks Act, as I mentioned, led by Senators PORTMAN, ALEXANDER, WARNER, and KING, which aims to tackle the Park Service's \$12 billion deferred maintenance backlog.

The second one is S. 1081, from Senators MANCHIN, GARDNER, and DAINES, to provide full and mandatory funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

To tackle deferred maintenance needs, the Great American Outdoors Act establishes a new National Parks and Public Land Legacy Restoration Fund. That fund will provide up to \$1.9 billion per year for 5 years to relevant Federal land management agencies.

The Great American Outdoors Act also expands the list of agencies that can receive funding beyond the Park Service to include the Forest Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, BLM, and the Bureau of Indian Education, which also has significant maintenance needs. This was something we recognized within the Energy Committee as we were looking at the status and situation on the maintenance of national parks. It begs the question, What about our other public lands?

In Alaska, our forest lands are great sources of recreation and opportunity, but they, too, have seen a maintenance backlog just continue to accumulate. When you visit Denali, the Grand Canyon, or Yosemite, you may not necessarily notice immediately the deferred maintenance issues. Likewise, as you drive into Washington, DC, you might not even realize that the George Washington Parkway is part of our National Park System, let alone a major contributor to the agency's maintenance backlog. The reality is that the Park Service, in particular, has carried substantial backlogs for a long time.

As chairman of the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee, this is something we have been working to try to get on top of, but it is like getting on top of this wave. If you can't get on top of it, it is just going to bury you. That is what has happened when you think about the \$12 billion backlog. These deferred maintenance needs just aren't possible to resolve through the annual appropriations process despite the considerable best efforts we have made. The longer they last, the more they jeopardize the visitors' ability to safely enjoy our national treasures.

In Alaska, the National Park Service has \$106 million in deferred maintenance. When you think about what I just outlined to you in terms of the number of acres we have in Federal land and parks and BLM refuge, \$106 million out of \$12 billion doesn't seem like that much. It is a lot to us back home, and \$33 million of that is considered critical.

Within Denali National Park we have a pretty significant visitor center, the Eielson Visitor Center, and the roof and the furnaces in various buildings need to be replaced there. We have a water treatment center at the Wrangell-St. Elias headquarters that need to be replaced. I think it is important for people to realize because those are not things you are going to notice. You are not going to notice that the road is in disrepair or you don't have restroom facilities, but when you are going into the park toward the end of the summer—in early September—and there is no heat in the visitor center, you are probably going to notice that.

I think it is important to recognize that the current list of deferred maintenance does not account for some of the very major challenges we are facing in Alaska, such as the situation with the Denali route. It is the only route in and out of the park. It needs substantial improvements due to ongoing subsidence. The estimates are all over the map, but, in fairness, we are talking tens of millions, perhaps in excess of \$100 million, to help repair or to perhaps even reroute that access.

When thinking about deferred maintenance in Alaska in the parks, we can account for only a fraction of that system. Recreation is the biggest user of our national forest system lands, but our forestlands, trails, and campgrounds need about \$5 billion in repairs. In Alaska, we have about \$105 million in backlog up there.

BLM manages nearly 50,000 buildings and structures—bridges, trails, and roads mostly in Western States, but they also have a growing backlog. In total in the Department of the Interior, we have about \$17.3 billion in deferred maintenance in fiscal year 2019. When combining that with the Forest Service, their maintenance backlog is \$22.5 billion in our Federal land management agencies.

The Great American Outdoors Act is attempting to remedy the issue by providing a downpayment to upgrade and to improve the aging infrastructure on our public lands. I kind of outlined the need for why we are here today. I indicated that I support funding to address the maintenance backlogs, making sure visitors are able to enjoy our landscapes and have the safest, most enjoyable experience as they see America's beauty. That is important. I think it is also important that we are cognizant about how we pay for this maintenance, how we address that.

As I mentioned, I am on the Appropriations Committee. We are trying to get ahead of this by making sure we are not seeking to add more to the account without making sure we are caring for the lands already under our jurisdiction.

The second part of the Great American Outdoors Act focuses on the Land and Water Conservation Fund. LWCF provides for both Federal and land acquisition and financial assistance for States' recreation development. You

will hear me talk a lot about LWCF stateside programs because I think it recognizes the role that States play in facilitating recreational access and leverages funds to build out those opportunities.

We have certainly seen the benefits in Alaska. Providing a few local examples, the State of Alaska has used LWCF matching funds to build ballfields in Utqiagvik, an accessible urban playground in Anchorage, and a ski area in Cordova.

I do think it is important for us to remember how LWCF was established, the core purpose of why it came about in the first place. Congress established this program in 1965 to build a national recreation system primarily in the East. To accomplish that, the Federal Government determined that it needed the ability to acquire this private land. So our predecessors provided LWCF with the authority and financial means to do so through revenues from offshore oil and gas.

We had a lot of discussion in the Energy and Natural Resources Committee about the Land and Water Conservation Fund. I was a proud sponsor of last year's lands package, which made permanent the collection and deposit provisions in the LWCF and put an end to years of uncertainty and lapses in those deposits. I was pleased to be able to help offer a series of commonsense reforms, which included a requirement that at least 40 percent of the funding go to stateside programs every year.

I also believe that LWCF's ability to acquire new Federal lands should be focused on the eastern States where the proportion is dramatically lowered. I also believe that it is better—much better—to decide LWCF's funding in the appropriations process each year in the context of the rest of our Nation's conservation and budgetary priorities, as opposed to mandatory funding.

I have stated that we should have an opportunity to discuss these priorities related to our obligations to our parks and to our conservation efforts. Again, I believe it is only fair and honest, as we debate this subject, that we recognize there are areas where we can improve this bill.

I come to this debate from a very constructive place. I think I have some very commonsense ideas to expand the bill to include conservation-related priorities that make sense for Alaska and our States across the country, priorities such as offshore revenue, which I am going to be speaking to in just a moment. There are some pretty simple, commonsense things; for example, if we are going to allow for deferred maintenance to be addressed within the LWCF account, why would we not want to make sure that our States have a similar flexibility?

In States like Alaska, where we have significant Federal lands already, it is not that we need to be buying up additional lands into the Federal account in Alaska, but what we do need is to help preserve those lands we have now

but that are subject to aggressive erosion. To be able to use funds from the LWCF account to deal with a coastal resilience initiative is something my colleague from Louisiana and my colleague from Rhode Island—we have been talking about how we can help improve that.

I think these discussions are not only timely but smart policy. I think it would be unfortunate if the Senate chooses not to allow good ideas to be incorporated.

We have a measure in front of us that has strong bipartisan support. We recognize that, and that is good at a time when we are trying to come together as a Congress and as a nation. I take great pride in the fact that, once again, leadership turns to the Energy and Natural Resources Committee for good ideas that have come out of our committee. The opportunity to include strong measures that will enhance this bill is something I think we need to be focusing on.

I would like to address the amendment that my colleague from Louisiana, Senator CASSIDY, has filed and that I am cosponsoring. This is an initiative that he has worked on, and he has explained that it is a matter of equity. It is a matter of equity and fairness as to how revenues are shared with the coastal States that enable offshore energy development.

Adding key portions of the COASTAL Act, S. 2418—which I am proud to cosponsor and was reported out of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee—to the measure we have in front of us, I think, makes sense. Senator CASSIDY has spoken to how this would expand offshore revenue sharing for States along the Gulf of Mexico, which post and support some of the most impressive and expensive coastal facilities anywhere in the world. If any of our colleagues have not had the opportunity to view what happens in the offshore areas of Louisiana, it is a trip that should be a priority.

Senator CASSIDY has spoken to the Gulf of Mexico piece of it. I want to speak to what the amendment would do for Alaska because it includes provisions that have been written by myself and by Senator SULLIVAN to establish a revenue-sharing program specific to our State, which has prolific offshore resources that we hope, one day, to be able to safely produce for the good of the Nation. But we are in a very, very different position than they are in the Gulf. We need investment to improve our coastal infrastructure, particularly in the Arctic. We have some different conservation priorities from some non-coastal States, which are enshrined in the purposes of the language in the amendment.

These principles of equity and fairness that we talk about as they relate to the Gulf of Mexico are the same principles here.

Just like from onshore Federal development, local governments and communities need to share in the revenues

from offshore development. We are the ones that host it, we bear the impacts, and the benefits the entire country derives from it simply wouldn't be possible were it not for these host States.

I think that this bill, this Great American Outdoors Act, is the right place to address offshore revenue sharing because everything within it relies on oil and gas revenues and LWCF, the fund that will help with our deferred maintenance. Everything relies on oil and gas revenues.

So, for as much vitriol as there may be out there, and criticism, as the industry takes, I think this might be a good time to recognize that oil and gas production generates Federal revenues, and it is these Federal revenues that fund these conservation priorities for dozens and dozens of Members on this floor and for hundreds of stakeholder groups.

Again, that is what has been happening within the LWCF, and it is about to be true for the deferred maintenance backlog, that where you are getting this funding source is from the oil and gas revenues. Those funds wouldn't come were it not for places like Louisiana, the Gulf Coast States, and again, hopefully, one day, Alaska.

When it comes to offshore revenue sharing, Alaska faces a disparity not only with onshore rates but with other coastal producers. So you have got the four Gulf States—Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas—that currently have a limited revenue sharing program established by the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act of 2006. Alaska, however, receives no revenue sharing, zero revenue sharing beyond the near-shore areas that all coastal States receive under section 8(g) of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act.

If Alaska is granted offshore revenue sharing, know that we will put it to productive use for conservation and environmental purposes. I think it is instructive because I think there is so much rhetoric and concern that we can't be doing further development in Alaska. It just shouldn't happen. Well, let me share with you, again, we are seeing coastal impact. We are seeing levels of erosion. We would like to be able to address the expenses that are associated with it.

So within the amendment that Senator CASSIDY has filed, in the Alaska provision, we looked specifically to authorize purposes—coastal protection, conservation, restoration, and assistance, including relocation for communities that are directly affected by coastal erosion, melting permafrost, and climate change related lawsuits.

Another authorized use is mitigation of damage to fish, wildlife, and natural resources. Adaptation planning, vulnerability assessments, emergency preparedness to build healthy and resilient communities, and the installation and operation of energy systems to reduce energy costs and greenhouse emissions, and then programs at institutions of higher education, these are the

primary prescriptions that Alaska would use its shared revenues for.

If you support the Great American Outdoors Act, you will be able to support offshore revenue sharing and the significant environmental benefits that it would provide to the Gulf of Mexico and to the State of Alaska, but we can only get there if we have an opportunity for the good ideas—substantive ideas—that Senator CASSIDY is leading with his COASTAL Act that I have introduced with regards to concerns that I briefly outlined and that I know that other Members have raised and shared as well.

I appreciate the support that we have received for offshore revenue sharing within the committee process itself. We are now asking for the full Senate to support the coastal States in equitable sharing of revenues. I think this is a key step, and I would urge that we have an opportunity to adopt that as we move forward.

With that, I yield to my friend, the Senator from Louisiana. I thank him for his leadership on this initiative. I have been so impressed not only by his advocacy when it comes to addressing the fairness and the equity issues that are associated with revenue sharing and what we need to do to lift the cap, but also to his commitment to ensure that his State and other coastal States that are seeing impact from climate change and seeing impact from erosion, that the conservation purposes that we have spoken to will have an opportunity to be addressed. I am thankful to be able to work with him and to follow his lead on this.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. CASSIDY. Madam President, first, I thank the Energy Committee chair for her kind words and for her advocacy. I may be speaking for a bit, and then when the majority leader comes, I will interrupt and allow him to close, and then I ask unanimous consent to finish my speaking, if that is OK.

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

Mr. CASSIDY. Madam President, I am on the Senate floor today to talk about the protection and restoration of the Gulf Coast, an issue extremely important to those I serve in Louisiana in the Gulf Coast, but important to the rest of the Nation, whether the rest of the Nation knows it or not. I will explain why that is.

In the coming days, the Senate will vote on whether or not to pass the Great American Outdoors Act. This bill dedicates funding over 5 years towards deferred maintenance. We have spoken about it at length. It adds an additional \$900 million to the Land and Water Conservation Fund, an amount which is already authorized but never funded. This would make it mandatory that it is funded.

Many will say that this is a good thing or even a great thing. I will tell

you, for Louisiana, for the Gulf Coast, and for a lot of other States, this is not a great thing in its current form. In fact, I will show how this bill currently benefits only certain States at the expense of others.

First, it is almost entirely funded with money from the Gulf of Mexico oil and gas production. So 50 to 60 percent of the dollars go to five States. So we are going to put up about \$9.5 billion, and 50 to 60 percent of it goes to five States. Needless to say, that lacks equity. I would argue that we can make this bill better in terms of benefiting many more Americans than it currently does.

First, let's speak about where the revenue comes from. Again, about \$1.9 billion a year comes from energy production, redistributing that across the country, as we mentioned, to deferred maintenance programs. About 90 percent of that revenue from which this money will be extracted comes from oil and gas production in the Gulf of Mexico. This will be about \$4.3 billion coming from the Gulf of Mexico. Now, this makes the Gulf of Mexico the primary revenue source for this whole project. It adds \$900 million to what is already designated the Land and Water Conservation Fund. There is \$1.9 billion a year for 5 years to go for deferred maintenance, and this is in addition to \$125 million a year, which is currently being spent on the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

Now, some of the advocates, by the way, just for a point of clarity, will say or imply that these dollars are not otherwise allocated. Let's just be clear. The dollars are allocated. Right now, the dollars that will be used for this fund come to the U.S. Treasury and are used for the priorities of the American people, and they are allocated for, you name it, higher education, debt service, paying troops, defense, et cetera. This would make it mandatory that a certain amount of this money would go towards both deferred maintenance and the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

Now, the Land and Water Conservation Fund is supposed to be a fund that functions to benefit, kind of, all Americans, but I would argue that it really benefits select regions of America. If you look at this map, where the dollars are spent are not where the people live. These are the coastal States, and here are the inland States. As it turns out, the areas that are most benefited by this funding are not on the coast. And, yet, as you will see in a second, that is where the people live.

If you live in a coastal State, on a per capita basis, your State receives about \$7.53 per person. If you live in one of these inland States, from the Land and Water Conservation Fund, you get \$17.66, more than two times plus. In fact, from about 2011 to 2015, if you are in one of these inland States, you got a ratio of almost 8-to-1 in terms of the dollars spent in the coastal States. If you take out Washington,

DC, and Virginia and maybe New York, then this \$7.53 is going to go far lower. If you are not one of those three States and you are on the coast, you are not doing very well on a per capita basis.

To make that point, in 2015, about 40 percent of the Nation's population lived in a county or parish that was directly on a coastline, and 82 percent of people live in a State which has a coastline. So 82 percent of the people live in one of these yellow States, and yet, on a per capita basis, two plus times is spent on those living in States which are inland.

Now, my point is that the dollars are not spent relative to where people live. This disparity disproportionately impacts States such as South Carolina, Georgia, North Carolina, Maine, and other coastal States. Now, I am a person who would rather have a solution, and the solution I am going to propose does not take money away from the Great American Outdoors Act. They will still continue to receive, in relatively sparsely populated States, a significant sum of the money.

I worked with Senator WHITEHOUSE on a bipartisan solution that would at least add some equity for those States which are coastline, as opposed to being inland. Now, that said, we acknowledge national parks have deferred maintenance. At the end of fiscal year 2018, this was estimated at roughly \$12 billion, but those parks are not uniformly distributed.

I mentioned earlier how a disproportionate amount of the money is going to go to five different States. According to the Park Service data, if you just looked at deferred maintenance, which will presumably guide where this money is spent, California; Washington, DC; Virginia; New York; North Carolina; Wyoming; Arizona; and the State of Washington make up nearly 60 percent of the deferred maintenance needs at national parks. If you live in one of those States, you are doing well, but if you are living in a State other than those, not so well.

Now, some will say that even though almost 60 percent of the money is going to seven States, everyone in the country benefits because you might visit the park, or we are all in it together, so why shouldn't I support a national park in a State which is far away from my hometown?

I suppose there is something to be said to that. On the other hand, if the person saying that lived in one of the States, which is getting just a tiny fraction of the total sum of dollars, and, yes, the people in their State will leave their State and go spend their money in Montana, for example, that will be great. People in Montana, on a per capita basis, get far more than anybody else.

We are in it together, I suppose, but you probably wouldn't reverse it. You probably wouldn't say: Wait a second, we think it is unfair that seven States get almost 60 percent of the dollars. We actually think it is better to be more

equitably spread, or maybe you would. I hope that you would.

States like Kansas, Iowa, and Nebraska see almost no benefit. Collectively, the deferred maintenance in these three States—Kansas, Iowa, and Nebraska—is .2 percent of total deferred maintenance backlog. It is the same for Connecticut, Delaware, Minnesota, and New Hampshire. Again, while there is deferred maintenance in Gulf Coast States, the real benefit to our States is investing in the coastline, which has a direct impact on sustainability.

To be fair, by the way, the Gulf of Mexico States do currently benefit. The Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act shares revenue with the four Gulf Coast States. We use this revenue, by State constitution, for coastal restoration. There is a little bit of irony, as the Senator from Alaska pointed out, that those who strongly support this bill oftentimes strongly disapprove of drilling for oil and gas, particularly in coastal areas, but they are now reliant upon that drilling in order to fund the Great American Outdoors Act.

I do believe that we can address this inequity, which has been highlighted. I put together a bill, as I mentioned earlier, with SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, called the COASTAL Act. We are working with other colleagues. We passed it out of the Energy Committee.

Actually, by that, Senator WHITEHOUSE was not on that bill, but we passed the COASTAL Act out of the Energy Committee with a bipartisan vote. The junior Senator from Alabama is my cosponsor. He should cosponsor, and he did. Alabama benefits exponentially more from the GOMESA Act than anything that the Great American Outdoors Act has to offer.

So all of this is to say that the Gulf Coast just wants equity. We want a more general benefit, not almost 60 percent of the benefit, going to seven States, and we also want the money to be distributed nationwide where people live, as opposed to where they might go on a 1-week vacation every 5 years.

I will speak just very briefly about the COASTAL Act. It is a bipartisan bill, again, passed by the Senate Energy Committee, committing more dollars towards environmental protection, reducing flood risks to businesses and industries along the Gulf Coast, protecting regions of the Gulf Coast for public recreation—we talked about recreation elsewhere. But committing dollars for all coastal States for environmental protection, once more, does not take money away from the Great American Outdoors Act.

Colleagues have heard me talk about the importance of revenue sharing for environmental protection. Again, the COASTAL Act passed out with bipartisan support, and its goals are consistent with the Great American Outdoors Act. By the way, the recent flood event in Louisiana—crystal ball—flooded homes in Mandeville and property in Grand Isle. If we have flooding

now, this bill would help prevent that flooding.

The COASTAL Act also places millions of dollars in a coastal fund, which benefits all coastal States, including those along the Great Lakes, putting money to protect where people live.

Once more, let me just show this. This is where people live, and 82 percent of the people live in a State with a coastline. Yet, where the money is going is, yes, to the coast, if you consider Washington, DC, and Virginia the coastline, but typically, it is going to five or six places, not to the places which have had the most flood events.

I walked around barrier islands in Georgia. Those barrier islands are evaporating. I hear that barrier islands in South Carolina are similarly under great duress. In Louisiana, as I already mentioned, we just had a flood event this past week. The COASTAL Act would put money for resiliency in States where 82 percent of the population lives. I just don't understand what is the objection to spending money to protect where people live. Why must we only do something nice for places where people vacation. If you put it to a referendum, people would first take care of their homes, and then they would take care of the place where they vacation.

I am not saying, by the way, don't take care of where they vacation, but I am saying we should at least give some dollars to where people live. Now, I will quote a statistic once more: 42 percent of Americans live in a parish or county that is directly on a shoreline. Why don't we do something to protect that shoreline where 42 percent of Americans live, not taking any dollars away from those sparsely populated places where people vacation?

By the way, when the COASTAL Act passed the Energy Committee, environmental groups such as the Energy Defense Fund, the National Wildlife Federation, Audubon Society, and Louisiana-based organizations such as the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation and the Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana signed a letter saying:

As we move to address the significant land, water, and wildlife conservation funding needs in our Nation, it is important that our coastlines are also equipped to confront the unique challenges that climate change presents. GOMESA has been a critically important funding stream for Louisiana and other Gulf Coast States, and expanding upon this success will protect national economic assets, providing better protection from storms, and enhance coastal habitat.

Now, bill sponsors will, rightly, say that the Great American Outdoors Act does not impact revenues flowing to GOMESA States, but—let's face it—it does cannibalize these dollars in Louisiana, so sooner or later you run out of money.

So if we are going to take all these dollars that could be spent elsewhere and put in these sparsely populated States where people vacation but not spend it in States where people actually live, not spend it in counties where

42 percent of the people live, which are directly upon a coastline, sooner or later you run out of money. And we are going to—just like a vacuum cleaner—suck those dollars down to these sparsely populated areas where people love to vacation.

So my point is that, in Louisiana, for example, we have a \$50 billion, 50-year master plan to protect our coastline, reducing flood risk to communities and assets so important to the rest of the Nation. The Great American Outdoors Act will make it more difficult to secure future dollars for this gulf coast restoration.

Now, as I mentioned before, a lot of people live in coastline communities, in counties and parishes, and from 2000 to 2016, the Gulf of Mexico region grew by almost 25 percent, more than any other coastline region.

Harris County, TX, and areas in Florida and New York also accounted for substantial growth along our Nation's coast. The proposal I filed commits dollars to these coastal States so that they can have a sustainable revenue stream now and in the future for needed investments.

If you asked the people in New York, after Hurricane Sandy, if they would like to have dollars in New York to protect against a future flood event, they would say yes.

Houston and Galveston have really borne the brunt of major flood events, of hurricanes striking their coastline. Do we think that they could use more money for coastal resiliency? Yes—as well as Lake Charles, LA, after Hurricane Rita, Calcasieu Parish and Cameron Parish. We talked about Louisiana with Hurricane Katrina, the gulf coast of Mississippi and Alabama, devastated after Hurricane Katrina. Would it be wise, as a nation, to put dollars there in order to have coastal resiliency to prevent, if you will, more flooding in the future so as to actually save more relief dollars that might be needed?

There are people, there are regions, battling rising sea levels, and I am mindful about their concerns and how we can address those.

I am told recently, by the way, that the Army Corps of Engineers has proposed a \$3.5 billion flood wall for Miami. Think about that—\$3.5 billion. This is in response to rising sea levels. But we are passing legislation now in which folks refuse to consider spending money for coastal resiliency. Instead, we are going to spend money on a \$3.5 billion seawall because we don't want to spend the money on other forms of coastal resiliency.

I recently spoke to one of my House colleagues, DONNA SHALALA, who represents the Miami-Dade region, and she speaks about the rising sea levels and the investments they need to make around South Beach. It is something touching where people live, not where people vacation. I am not sure why we emphasize where people vacation over where people live.

To pay for this bill, again, we are taking dollars from an area of the country greatly impacted by coastal erosion, so these gulf funds actually play a role in restoring or maintaining—

You will see a poster later on which shows the oil and gas development taking place off the coast of Louisiana, the oil and gas development that funds the Great American Outdoors Act.

Louisiana's coast is a working coast in which people from this working coast go out to maintain that source of revenue, but look what is happening to Louisiana's predicted land loss. Over the next 50 years, in a reasonable scenario, all of this red spot will be lost to erosion.

By the way, look what happens to New Orleans. It is now directly along the Gulf of Mexico. The next hurricane comes, and there goes the port structure. There goes the ability for people in the Midwest to get their grains to the international market and the ability of this working coast to support the oil and gas drilling and, therefore, to support the source of revenue required and relied upon by the Great American Outdoors Act. It will be lost.

It is not just me saying it. Of course, I am the Senator. I love my State. I am going to do whatever I can. You may not believe me, but on the other hand, the State's land loss has been highlighted in countless feature stories, including in the New York Times and National Geographic, to name two.

By the way, Google Maps can't keep up. When looking at the Louisiana coastline, Google Maps will show an area with land that has now been replaced with open water. Louisiana loses about, oh, a football field of land, I think it is, an hour. Whenever I say it, I can't believe it, it is so fast. It is so rapid. So not only does this pose a risk to the energy assets, a risk to communities, and a risk to port assets; it poses a risk to our national livelihood.

Now, folks in Louisiana are going to look at this and say: How is the Great American Outdoors Act going to help us? We are going to work to produce all this oil and gas, and we are not going to get any of the benefits.

Senator KENNEDY and I recently had a call with more than 20 Louisiana parish presidents. They are, very understandably, concerned about the lack of equity. "Concerned" is diplomatic. "Ticked off" is how better to describe it.

I had another call with close to 100 businesses. They, too, are pleading for equitable treatment along the gulf.

So when I speak about the Great American Outdoors Act cannibalizing dollars from the Gulf of Mexico to spend money in places where people don't live as opposed to protecting my coastline, which, in turn, ensures that we can continue to have the source of revenue—but also coastlines around the Nation in counties and parishes where people actually live as opposed

to going to places where people only visit—I am trying to make a case for those people.

Will you show the energy assets.

I have been speaking about these energy assets that are required. It is one thing to say it; it is another thing to look at it. All of these are part of the gulf coast energy infrastructure that the rest of our Nation relies upon.

I am a doctor. I think like this. If you saw a map of the Nation, you would see pipelines coming out of this region across the rest of the Nation, and in my mind, as a doctor, I think of this as being a heart. If we need energy to fuel our lives, the heart is right here, and it beats here. The aorta, if you will, the pipelines that flow out, taking gasoline to Philadelphia, taking natural gas to another part of our country, taking the refined fuel products to Atlanta, GA, in the case of jet fuel—you name it, they come out of this area.

If this area cannot be sustained, we cannot sustain that part of our energy economy. We will not have jet flights to Hawaii or jet flights from Atlanta around the world, as the hub, or for New Orleans, people coming in for Mardi Gras, Jazz Fest, or to Breaux Bridge for a crawfish festival. It will not happen because this pipeline structure cannot be sustained with a coastline which is eroding.

Some of these—let me just speak—are oil import sites, natural gas market centers, processing facilities, liquefied natural gas export facilities, strategic petroleum reserve, major working ports, such as Port Fourchon. I could go on. These assets and companies then employ hundreds of thousands of men and women contributing billions of dollars in government revenues with an even greater impact on our annual GDP.

This is what powers our country. This is where the revenue is coming from for the Great American Outdoors Act. This revenue stream will not be sustainable if we don't at least have some consideration of how to restore this.

The Senator from Ohio had spoken about a leaky roof and the leaky roof increased its leak and now all those assets are being damaged within a park. That is great. People like to visit parks, and we should take care of leaky roofs. I am more concerned about a coastline that is dissolving, and, as it dissolves, you lose the energy infrastructure, which is required to pay for that park building to be fixed.

I will also point out the flooding risk for the folks in my State. Again, I spoke about the communities at risk. This is predicted future flooding from a 100-year flood event, without action. Let's just say, if it is colored, it is bad, where you are going to get 0.5 to 5 feet of water north of New Orleans.

If you want to speak about something that should be done now to prevent future problems, I have bigger issues than a leaky roof in a park

building. I have entire communities washed away into the ocean, at risk for great flooding. I am speaking of New Orleans. I could be speaking of Miami, of Houston, of New York.

Why don't we spend money where people live as opposed to spending it only where people vacation?

Now, you might be sitting in Iowa or Kansas or Nebraska thinking: Well, I am only getting 0.2 percent of this money. I am not getting any benefit whatsoever, but why does it matter to me to have a coastline? Why does it matter to me at all?

Well, let's look at how investing in the coast impacts our Nation economically. Let's look at what happened after Hurricane Katrina. After Hurricane Katrina, the flooding took out the port structure in South Louisiana; therefore, the in place for all the goods coming from the Ohio, Missouri, Mississippi, and other rivers for export to the rest of the world—the rest of the United States—was terribly impacted. If you look at this—if we have a lack of coastal investment—corn exports were down 23 percent post-Hurricane Katrina; barley, down 100 percent; wheat, down 54 percent; soy, down 25 percent; total grain exports, down 24 percent after Hurricane Katrina.

If that port system in South Louisiana and in the lower Calcasieu River in Houston is damaged by flooding—that is going to happen under current scenarios—then our midwestern farmers are not able to ship to international markets. Their livelihood is damaged.

In moving goods across our country for export, one coalition committed to ensuring future navigation on the Mississippi said that the lower Mississippi has an estimated annual impact of \$735 billion to the Nation's economy and is responsible for 2.4 million jobs. That starts with being able to navigate goods through the various locks and port complexes near the mouth of the river.

The USDA recognizes this. It says in a report on the importance of inland waterways that farm products are 14 percent of total commodities moved along inland waterways. Further, processed flour, animal feed, milled grain products, and fertilizers add another 5 percent to agricultural related products.

It is important to remember, the Mississippi River Valley encompasses almost 60 percent of our country, so many major rivers connect with the Mississippi to deliver those products around the world. If we are going to have a port system that is going to take those goods and allow them to be transported around the world, it has to be a sustained, reinforced coastline.

In my State, we have some of the largest barge and container ports in the country. The Port of South Louisiana is the largest grain exporter in the country. The Port of Baton Rouge is home to the largest grain operator in the State. Ports farther to the south in

Mobile and Texas are, likewise, important.

If we are going to have rising sea levels and spend all of our money on the inland areas—not where people live but where people visit on vacation—as opposed to the coastlines, which have the ports that sustain where people live and sustain the vitality of those in the heartland, we are being foolish with our public policy.

The same USDA report highlighted the consequences of an inadequate infrastructure along the waterways, saying that inadequate infrastructure leads to reduced transportation capacity, raising shipping rates, meaning less income to the farmers who are shipping—which reduces U.S. economic activity—and a loss of global competitiveness.

I could go on. I will just say that associated industries impacted by the Iowa grain exports support business from agriculture, forestry, real estate, restaurants, and pesticides, to name a few. This is just in Iowa.

The ports in the gulf coast support those folks in Iowa, and we should support the ports. We should support the ports, which support Iowa.

To summarize, my colleagues and I are fighting for fairness and equity. That is what this is about. I have highlighted obvious inequities both in how the gulf region is treated and how other States are treated—spending money not where people live but where people visit.

I am pointing out the consequences to midwestern farmers. They don't benefit very much at all—if you live in Iowa, Kansas, or Nebraska—from the Great American Outdoors Act, but they would benefit from a sustainable port system, which means that those ports they rely upon to ship goods around the world will be there even as sea levels rise.

Now, I am all for, by the way, taking care of deferred maintenance in parks, but I think, in the relative hierarchy of what we should do, we should take care of where people live. And I will repeat once more: 42 percent of the people live in a parish or county that is directly on a coastline; 82 percent of Americans live in a coastal State. That is not where the bulk of these dollars are spent.

We have a bipartisan group of Senators supporting; we have environmentally focused groups supporting as well, and what they are supporting is an amendment which would actually help create this equity that would allow dollars to be put into a fund to help coastal States—where people live—but would be part of a bill to take care of where people visit.

I wish it were the other way around, but those are not the priorities of the people who are promoting the Great American Outdoors Act.

I thank you for this time.

I yield the floor.

MORNING BUSINESS

TRIBUTE TO DOREEN KRAFT

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, the last few months have presented an unprecedented challenge for communities and families across the country, and Vermont is no different. It is refreshing to take a moment to celebrate the people and entities that are at the foundation of our community identities. I want to take a moment to recognize one of these people in Vermont—Doreen Kraft—who was profiled in March for her leadership of Burlington City Arts.

For the past 25 years, Doreen has been the director of Burlington City Arts—BCA—a Burlington city department that promotes Vermont artists while supporting art exhibition, creation, and education. Doreen is an integral member of the Burlington city government and arts community. As described by Pat Robbins, the former BCA Center board chair, Doreen is “overcommitted . . . and always overscheduled, but she is a marvelous fundraiser. Everybody takes her calls. Everybody goes to lunch with her.” As the director of the BCA Center, Doreen has raised millions of dollars that have helped BCA further the arts in Burlington. Something that I most appreciate about Doreen is that she makes the arts accessible for all Vermonters. Jacqueline Posley, a BCA board member who relocated to our beautiful State from Mississippi, put it best by saying that Doreen fosters an environment at BCA that values people most for the connections they make in the community, rather than “by the depth of their pockets.” While she has led the BCA Center for 25 years, Doreen's work in Burlington began long before she was appointed director. In 1981, as the mayor of Burlington, now-Senator BERNIE SANDERS made the accessibility of the arts a priority, and Doreen became the first paid employee of the mayor's Task Force for the Arts. Doreen established a concert series in Burlington's Battery Park and the annual Burlington Discover Jazz Festival. By 1990, the task force had become a department of the city government, renamed Burlington City Arts. In 1995, the year Doreen was appointed as director, BCA opened its first gallery in the old Firehouse on Church Street, Burlington's main downtown area. Since then, the Firehouse Gallery and BCA have gained substantial recognition. With extensive fundraising and community investment, BCA renovated the Firehouse into a full visual arts center, renaming the gallery to BCA Center in 2011. Since 1995, the gallery has become a hub for visual arts in downtown Burlington, helping the city to become a destination known for its burgeoning arts scene, due in large part to Doreen's work as director.

Doreen has continued to expand the reach of BCA beyond Church Street. BCA recently purchased and began the

renovation of a 9,000-square-foot warehouse in Burlington's South End, a post-industrial neighborhood with its own indigenous art scene. While South End artists and businessowners initially saw the warehouse purchase as an encroachment by city government on their turf, relations have improved as collaboration between BCA and South End artists has grown, on issues of art promotion and city planning.

As renovation of the warehouse continues, I look forward to seeing how Doreen and Burlington City Arts can continue to give voice to new artists and perspectives, promoting not only the arts community but also greater conversation and cooperation between the government and the people it serves. With that, as we make decisions on how to assist our communities through this crisis, we must also remember the communities that we represent, and individuals that make our communities so remarkable. I want to recognize and thank Doreen Kraft, not only for her everlasting support of the arts, but as an ardent public servant whose efforts highlight the importance of community, equality, and accessibility.

I ask unanimous consent that her profile be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From Seven Days, Mar. 11, 2020]

AFTER 40 YEARS AND FIVE MAYORS, DOREEN KRAFT STEERS BURLINGTON CITY ARTS INTO THE SOUTH END

(By Margaret Grayson)

Doreen Kraft doesn't really want to talk about Doreen Kraft. During a recent reception for new exhibitions at the BCA Center on Church Street, she preferred to direct a reporter's attention to everyone else in the room: a dedicated board member; Burlington's supportive mayor; the brilliant director of another local nonprofit.

Upstairs in her office, the longtime executive director of Burlington City Arts praised its successive gallery curators and explained how willing they had been to do hands-on work and volunteer extra time. She talked up a waitress at a restaurant that was partnering with BCA, who, unacquainted with Kraft, recently encouraged her to make a donation to the organization.

Kraft excels at this kind of schmoozing, probing and promoting at the same time. People describe her as a coach, an advocate, a great listener—essentially, who she is to other people, as if her role is to reflect the best version of everyone around her. It's an approach that has helped her grow BCA—through the administrations of five different mayors—from a janitor's closet in the basement of city hall to a municipal department charged with fostering public art and culture.

Since the organization's founding in 1980, Kraft, 68, has been a driving force. For the last 25 years, she's led BCA as it has created galleries and studios, developed art classes and summer camps, curated art in public spaces, won and distributed grants, and organized citywide events such as Festival of Fools and Highlight, Burlington's New Year's Eve celebration. The city contributes a portion of the funds for those cultural activities.

Kraft raises at least half of the rest of the money single-handedly. Most recently, she