

The preamble, as amended, was agreed to.

The resolution, as amended, and the preamble, as amended, reads as follows:

S. RES. 454

Whereas José Daniel Ferrer García is a Cuban democracy and human rights activist who has dedicated his life to promoting greater political pluralism and respect for fundamental freedoms in Cuba;

Whereas Mr. Ferrer was born in Cuba on July 29, 1970, in the province of Santiago de Cuba;

Whereas, in the late 1990s, Mr. Ferrer joined the Christian Liberation Movement (MCL), a peaceful political movement led by late Cuban activist Oswaldo Paya;

Whereas, through coordination with the MCL, Mr. Ferrer helped lead the Varela Project, an initiative to collect the signatures of citizens to petition the Government of Cuba for democratic reforms and protections for freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and freedom of assembly;

Whereas, in March 2003, as part of a series of sweeping arrests of 75 democracy activists, Mr. Ferrer was arrested by Cuban authorities for his work on the Varela Project and sentenced to 25 years in prison;

Whereas, in March 2004, Amnesty International declared the group of 75 democracy activists, including Mr. Ferrer, to be prisoners of conscience and called for their immediate and unconditional release;

Whereas, in 2009, Mr. Ferrer was honored with the Democracy Award given annually by the National Endowment for Democracy;

Whereas, in March 2011, as part of an agreement brokered by the Catholic Church, Mr. Ferrer refused to abandon his homeland and was released from prison to remain in Cuba;

Whereas, in August 2011, Mr. Ferrer founded the Patriotic Union of Cuba (UNPACU), a nonviolent political movement dedicated to promoting human rights, democratic principles, and fundamental freedoms in Cuba;

Whereas, on June 7, 2012, Mr. Ferrer testified via digital video conference at a hearing of the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate;

Whereas, since he was released from jail in March 2011, Mr. Ferrer has been frequently harassed, regularly surveilled, and repeatedly jailed by Cuban authorities for his role in UNPACU;

Whereas, on October 1, 2019, Mr. Ferrer was imprisoned arbitrarily by Cuban authorities for his leadership of UNPACU and outspoken advocacy for human rights and democratic principles in Cuba;

Whereas, on October 1, 2019, Cuban authorities detained 3 other members of UNPACU, Fernando González Vailant, José Pupo Chaveco, and Roilan Zarraga Ferrer;

Whereas the family of Mr. Ferrer was permitted to visit him only twice while he was imprisoned arbitrarily, and the wife of Mr. Ferrer reported that she saw evidence that he had been physically abused and mistreated;

Whereas, on April 3, 2020, Mr. Ferrer was arbitrarily convicted and sentenced to 4 years and 6 months of house arrest for the purported crimes of "injuries" and "privation of liberty";

Whereas, on April 3, 2020, Mr. González Vailant, Mr. Pupo Chaveco, and Mr. Zarraga Ferrer were also arbitrarily convicted to multiyear sentences of house arrest; and

Whereas, since he was placed under house arrest, Mr. Ferrer has informed international media outlets that during his time in prison he was subjected to "torture" and "constant humiliation", and denied access to food and medical treatment: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) condemns the arbitrary conviction, sentencing, and imprisonment of leading Cuban democracy and human rights activist José Daniel Ferrer and calls for his immediate and unconditional release;

(2) calls for the immediate and unconditional release of all members of the Patriotic Union of Cuba (UNPACU) that have been arbitrarily imprisoned;

(3) commends Mr. Ferrer for his unwavering commitment to advance democratic principles, human rights, and fundamental freedoms in Cuba; and

(4) recognizes the important contributions of UNPACU and all of its members for their efforts to promote greater respect for democratic principles, human rights, and fundamental freedoms in Cuba.

RECOGNIZING THE 199TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF GREECE AND CELEBRATING DEMOCRACY IN GREECE AND THE UNITED STATES

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 470, S. Res. 523.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 523) recognizing the 199th anniversary of the independence of Greece and celebrating democracy in Greece and the United States.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to; the preamble be agreed to; and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 523) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of February 27, 2020, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

COMMENDING CAREER PROFESSIONALS AT THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE FOR THEIR EXTENSIVE EFFORTS TO REPATRIATE UNITED STATES CITIZENS AND LEGAL PERMANENT RESIDENTS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to Calendar No. 474, S. Res. 567.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 567) commending career professionals at the Department of State for their extensive efforts to repatriate United States citizens and legal permanent residents during the COVID-19 pandemic.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to; the preamble be agreed

to; and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 567) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of May 7, 2020, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

RECESS SUBJECT TO THE CALL OF THE CHAIR

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate recess subject to the call of the Chair.

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

There being no objection, the Senate, at 5:21 p.m., recessed subject to the call of the Chair and reassembled at 7:59 p.m. when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. ALEXANDER).

TAXPAYER FIRST ACT OF 2019— Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, I rise today because I am concerned about the Great American Outdoors Act in its current form. It spends billions on places where Americans vacation but absolutely nothing protecting the areas where 42 percent of Americans live, which are the parishes and counties on coastlines. Of course these parishes and counties are in coastal States, and 85 percent of Americans live in coastal States.

To repeat, the Great American Outdoors Act mandates spending billions on the outdoors where Americans vacation but does absolutely nothing to protect the outdoors where Americans live.

Tonight, I will speak to why that is a problem for coastal States like my State of Louisiana and how one amendment, the coastal amendment, addresses this disparity.

These are uncertain times. Coronavirus continues to kill. Our country struggles to confront and address the issues raised by the George Floyd killing. Hindsight is 20/20, but we wish that we had stockpiled more personal protective equipment. We wish Minneapolis had instituted police reforms. If wise action had addressed these issues before, then these issues might be better now.

It highlights the need for wise public policy—looking beyond the immediate and thinking about that which may occur. On the other hand, there are some things that occur that we know are going to happen because they happened before, so 20/20 hindsight is not needed. Coastal flooding is an example. Hurricanes happen regularly. Sea levels are rising. There will be more coastal flooding, more pictures of families on life rafts, the Cajun Navy in small boats doing rescues, the Coast Guard

and helicopters pulling Americans up in harnesses. We know this will happen again. We actually have the opportunity to proactively address it.

When the basics of the Great American Outdoors Act were being considered in committee, there was another bill passed to address coastal issues. The authors of the Great American Outdoors Act don't live in coastal States, or if they do, their States benefit greatly from the Great American Outdoors Act legislation. But that leaves the rest of us wondering, is it right to care more about parks than about people? Because that seems to be the priority the Senate is going on.

Let's establish context. The Senate is nearing a vote on the Great American Outdoors Act. The bill dedicates billions in funding for deferred maintenance, mostly in national parks where Americans vacation and predominantly in seven States. It also puts an additional \$900 million in the Land and Water Conservation Fund, which is used to buy more land for the Federal Government, principally in Western States.

I have no problem with the idea behind the bill. National parks are national treasures. Americans flock to them to learn about history and to experience the natural majesty of our great country. I know some of the floor speeches extolling this bill have shown grizzly bears and mountains and pine trees and such like that. I am with it. I love them. I think they are beautiful. But I do take issue with how the bill ignores the environmental needs of coastal States in favor of fixing broken toilets and leaky roofs, because I can show the needs of coastal States, not in terms of grizzly bears and pine trees and majestic mountains but in terms of people being flooded out of their homes because of the lack of investment in coastal resiliency.

As a pictorial of where the money is spent from the Land and Water Conservation Fund, the blue States, mostly inland—they have West Virginia kind of poking out there, but it is not a coastal State—the coastal States actually don't do very well at all, do they. Even though this is where 85 percent of the American people live—the coastal States—we can see that the remaining 15 percent live in States that get the bulk of the funding.

Coastal per capita spending in the Land and Water Conservation Fund is \$7.53, but if you look at what inland States receive, it is \$17.66 on a per capita basis. There is a lot of benefit in living here if you are putting more money into the Land and Water Conservation Fund, but if you live on a coastline threatened by flooding, the benefit is not there, and that is my concern with this bill.

Again, let's establish these facts: 42 percent of the population lives in parishes and counties directly on a coastline; 82 percent live in coastal States. These figures—\$17.66 spent on the inland and \$7.53 spent on the coastal—

show a stark disconnect between protecting Americans from flooding where they live, work, and help others earn a living and spending money to fix up the parks where they occasionally visit.

To repeat, more money is being spent on places where people vacation, not protecting where they live.

That is the Land and Water Conservation Fund aspects of it. Let's talk about the parks with the deferred maintenance.

These are the seven States that do pretty well. They do fantastic. Sixty percent, roughly, of the money will go to these—including Washington, DC—these States that are highlighted; everyone else, not so much. In fact, if you are in Kansas, Nebraska, and Iowa, only 0.2 percent of the Nation's deferred maintenance is in those States. So out of the billions being spent in this program, 0.2 percent will go to those States collectively. Clearly, there are winners and losers.

I spoke of Nebraska, Iowa, and Kansas. Other States also get far less. The coastal States of Georgia, South Carolina, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Minnesota, Delaware, Maine, and other coastal States do very poorly.

Midwestern States like Kansas, Iowa, and Nebraska I have already mentioned, and why is this important? Well, I will mention it again in a little bit, but I have been to some of those coastlines. They are kind of going away too. If you go to a barrier island in Georgia, they are having to build seawalls because the waves are now crashing on beautiful homes, threatening to wash them away into the sea. beautiful homes, threatening to wash them away into the sea.

We should be spending money not just on parks but also where people live. That would be wise public policy.

All the coastal States I just mentioned, including those which do receive disproportionate benefit from the Great American Outdoors Act, would also benefit, as would the Gulf Coast States, if we invest collectively as a nation in coastal resiliency. The reason this is so important—failure to invest in coastal resiliency costs lives, costs communities, costs taxpayers, and costs us a lot. Land lost due to rising sea levels and other factors threaten the safety of the 42 percent of Americans who live in a county or parish directly on a coastline.

We know that if you invest in coastal resiliency and flood protection on the front end, you can save billions on the back end protecting against the next hurricane or flood event.

Again, we are spending billions on parks we occasionally visit, but there is nothing in this bill on where we live, raise families, and make our livelihoods.

Perhaps the greatest irony is how the Great American Outdoors Act is funded. The bill takes up to \$1.9 billion a year in revenue generated from energy production principally from the Gulf of Mexico to spend it on the deferred

maintenance, again, principally in seven States that I just pointed out. Ninety percent of that revenue is from the Gulf of Mexico. So the State—my State, for example—that produces the energy with the resources that disproportionately fund programs in parks where people occasionally visit is the one which has its needs unaddressed.

In my State of Louisiana, this is particularly troublesome. We are the hardest hit State in the Nation by land loss, so much so that if nothing is done, the energy infrastructure that comes off of the coast of Louisiana to support the oil and gas development that supplies the revenue for the Great American Outdoors Act—that energy infrastructure will be threatened, which means that the goose laying the golden egg dies, along with my working coast and the communities of the people who live there.

If it seems like I am passionate about this, by golly, I am. By golly, why do people care more about parks than they do about people? That just disturbs me.

But it isn't just the energy infrastructure lost; it will be lives and livelihoods, communities and community—again, by the way, costing taxpayers a lot of money.

Let's have some examples of this. Hurricane Katrina. Federal taxpayers had to pay \$125 billion in Louisiana, Mississippi, and other parts of the gulf coast for recovery; Hurricane Harvey, \$125 billion in Texas and Louisiana; Hurricane Maria, \$90 billion in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands; Hurricane Sandy, \$65 billion in the Mid-Atlantic—New York, New Jersey; Hurricane Irma, \$50 billion in Florida; Hurricane Ike, \$30 billion in Louisiana and Texas. I could mention Rita. I could mention many others that have cost the Federal taxpayers billions in order to help States recover.

The combined cost of hurricane damage from every storm since 1990 is nearly \$685 billion. Not all of this damage could have been avoided. It is clear that it couldn't have been. But a lot could have been. If the marshes south of New Orleans had not been allowed to erode away, they would have instead eroded the power of Katrina, decreasing its force when it hit New Orleans, perhaps preserving those levies. If we put money up beforehand, it saves us so much on the back end.

The coastal amendment does not ask for billions. I feel like it should, but I know I couldn't get it. I am only asking that some money in this bill be included for coastal resiliency. I will say it once more: If we are spending billions on where people vacation, shouldn't we spend something on resiliency for the parishes and counties where 42 percent of Americans live? Should we care more about parks than we do about people?

These numbers I just went through—they are not just numbers; they represent people. I see their pictures. I see

the lives lost. I see the communities completely upended, taking years to recover—and by the way, communities that are vitally important not just to themselves but to the entirety of the United States.

Ocean and coastal communities, including the Great Lakes, account for 82 percent of the U.S. population and economy. NOAA reports that the ocean economy contributes 2.3 percent of the Nation's employment, 1.6 percent of GDP, 3 million jobs, 154,000 businesses, \$129 billion in wages, and \$304 billion in goods and services. These jobs are threatened when sea levels rise and erosion and flooding occur. Their contribution to our economy is threatened.

By the way, I mentioned that energy production is threatened, and if we cannot produce energy, there is no funding mechanism for the Great American Outdoors Act.

We are spending money where people vacation, not where they live and work.

I will just use my own State as a case in point of the need for coastal resiliency.

Will you look at that map? This is a reasonable scenario of what will happen to Louisiana if there is no investment in coastal resiliency. The red is the land that is lost.

This is New Orleans. It effectively becomes an island protected by levees, and all of this is lost. Oh, well. That is Louisiana. It may not matter. Second most productive fisheries—in fact, the most productive fisheries in the lower 48; Alaska beats us—but in the lower 48, the most productive fisheries. Port systems that are throughout here support the economy of all of the inland waterways. These commodities that flow around the world at a competitive price advantage because of our fish and port system—threatened because of the absence of sustainability. And I could go on.

We are losing roughly—by the time I finish talking, Louisiana will lose roughly a football field worth of land. Google Maps can't even keep up—it will show you land, and it is open water. So if you have ever gone fishing in the gulf, you are watching your little radar right there, and you think you are about to hit something, and it is just open. That land has melted away, and the maps can't keep up.

So what is at risk? Oil and gas production. I have mentioned that. But oil and gas production do not do it justice. All of this is pipelines and energy infrastructure that benefit not just Louisiana; it benefits the entire country.

I am a physician. This is the way I look at it: If your body needs energy, so does our modern economy. And to the degree that we have oil and gas, jet fuel, plastics, resins, natural gas coming from around the country, it principally comes from here. To the degree that we support jobs by exporting clean-burning natural gas around the world to replace coal in, say, China so

that hopefully they have fewer emissions blowing over into the United States, it disproportionately comes from this gulf coast. This is what is sustained. This is what is at risk if we don't invest in coastal resiliency—energy assets such as pipelines, refineries, oil export sites, natural gas market centers, processing facilities, liquefied natural gas export facilities, the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, and ports like Port Fourchon that keep the gulf economy running.

Again, the majority of this infrastructure is based off the coast of Louisiana. Without investment in flood protection and rebuilding barrier islands, this critical part of the American economy—not to mention the funding stream for the Great American Outdoors Act—remains exposed and at risk.

Again, these aren't just numbers; these are people. There are 375,000 jobs directly tied to the oil and gas industry across the Gulf States, and it doesn't include the jobs that are secondary there just because of the oil and gas industry stimulating demand on commercial goods and services.

But it doesn't stop there. I mentioned the port structure being threatened.

By the way, somebody from Kansas, Iowa, or Nebraska might be saying: You know, I don't do well at all in the Great American Outdoors Act, but how does what Senator CASSIDY is talking about help me? I don't live on a coastline.

Yes, but your commodities go around the world through the port system that is based on the gulf coast, and this shows it.

After Hurricane Katrina and our port system in south Louisiana was so damaged, this is what happened to the export of commodities from the heartland: Corn exports down 23 percent; barley, 100 percent; wheat, 54 percent; soy, 25 percent. Total grain exports were down 24 percent. Those aren't just numbers; those are families who suddenly are struggling because they thought they had their budget worked out, and now their exports are down 100 percent.

That lower Louisiana, lower Mississippi port system is the reason we can ship our grains around the world at competitive prices relative to other countries. Without that port system, our farmers are at a disadvantage.

So it isn't just advocating for coastal resiliency for my State because I want those communities to be preserved and for the energy infrastructure we rely upon to, among other things, fund this bill we are about to vote on, it is also vital to the livelihood of these farmers and their families and their economy in these inland States. If we don't protect that port system by investing in coastal resiliency, their livelihoods will be affected.

Investing in coastal resiliency protects all these endeavors and prevents the astronomical costs associated with

severe flooding events and hurricanes, and it can be done.

I mentioned earlier about how you invest a little bit on the front end, and you can save billions on the back end.

Terrebonne Parish recently put up a new flood system, and they put it up after a flood event in which a major portion of their lower parish flooded. They then built the flood system, and then they subsequently had another high-water event. Ten thousand homes that would have flooded did not flood because of that new flood wall.

We invested in coastal resiliency. The Federal taxpayer, through the National Flood Insurance Program, saved millions—hundreds of millions. More importantly, lives were saved and communities were saved, and a vibrant community, with workers who go offshore to produce the energy that is funding the Great American Outdoors Act, was able to pick up and continue with their life without disruption.

I am speaking of Louisiana; it could be any coastal area across the United States. So investing in coastal resiliency protects all these endeavors.

I am not saying take any money away from the Great American Outdoors Act. The coastal amendment, if folded in, doesn't touch a dime of the billions going to the parks. All I am asking is to have some revenue to go to save the lives and the livelihoods of all these people, the 42 percent of Americans who live in coastal communities.

Instead, we spend it all on parks, pot-holes, broken toilets, and leaky roofs. I have heard the argument that if you fix that leaky roof in time, you save more money down the road, and I accept that argument. I am just applying it to where people live. If we do something for coastal resiliency now, we save not just a leaky roof and not just a little bit of money. We save a community, we save lives, and we save lots of money.

I recently spoke to 20 parish residents. As folks know, in Louisiana, we don't have counties. We have parishes. I had another call with 100 different business leaders, and they just plead for fairness to the gulf and to coastal parishes and counties. And what is unfair, you ask? Again, if you live in a coastal area that generates the billions being spent in the Great American Outdoors Act, you are upset to learn that the Senate is passing a bill spending more money on vacation spots than on protecting your homes, jobs, and environment.

It is not just the Louisiana coast. I have a friend who lives in Seal Beach, CA. I visited him a couple of years ago, and he said that water was coming up and flooding buildings it never had before. Well, in showing you that coastal resiliency investment can work, now Seal Beach, apparently, spends \$1 million a year building berms to protect from winter storms driving it in.

So, first, coastal resiliency can work. But, two, sea levels are rising, and the beach is shrinking. It will require more

of Seal Beach to build those berms to protect those buildings. Now, that is just Seal Beach, but it does show you that resiliency can be effective, but it also shows you that it is needed.

I also walked, as I told you before, along those barrier islands in Georgia, and I am just struck. Oh, my gosh, I couldn't afford those beautiful homes. They had to build sea walls because the high tides are higher now and threatening the foundations of those buildings. This bill invests nothing to protect the beaches and the outdoors where people live.

I am told that the Army Corps of Engineers—this is hearsay. I think it is true, but I don't know. It is a reliable source. The Army Corps of Engineers has recently proposed building a \$3.5 billion floodgate to protect the Miami harbor. I have also read that property values are declining on Miami Beach because as sea levels rise, the people who are insuring them and may be purchasing are afraid that they will be inundated by rising sea levels.

When I drive along the Mississippi gulf coast, they have homes elevated 12 or 15 feet in the air. It is kind of a testimony to the threat that our new environment poses to those who live on the beach. It kind of reminds me of a picture I saw of Venice, Italy, where they used to have shops on the ground floor, but now the ground floors are empty because sea level has risen and flooding has extended. So now there is such regularity of flooding that Venice no longer uses the ground floor.

Now, we are not Venice in our country. We are not built in the middle of a marsh, but we are built and 42 percent of us live in a coastal parish. This is a threat. It does not take 20/20 hindsight. We can see that this is going to happen. We already hear the Army Corps of Engineers planning for this. We see property values declining. We see flood walls being built, and we scratch our chin and know that ultimately it will not be enough.

The Senate could be investing in that coastal resiliency, not just, to say, in my State of Louisiana, where we are actually generating the funds that would be used for the Great American Outdoors Act, but, no, we are not. We are fixing potholes and parks where people visit but not investing in coastal resiliency where they live.

What does the coastal amendment do? Because I do think this could fix this. Again, there are nationwide benefits. Let me repeat. It doesn't take a dime away from the Great American Outdoors Act. There will still be the billions going for the parks. But what this does do is it sends money to spend on coastal resiliency where people live. It ensures the stability of the port system in the Lower Mississippi and down in the Texas gulf coast to help America's farmers export. It helps treat the Gulf States fairly, which really disproportionately do not benefit from these two acts that they are funding. Everybody wins.

Indeed, if you are a State like California or North Carolina that does really well under the Great American Outdoors Act, you also get money for your coastline. We are not being prejudicial. We are just trying to do something to help create coastal resiliency in the parishes and counties where 42 percent of American people live, as opposed to not spending a dime to help protect it.

Now, I said at the beginning of this speech about the coastal amendment—I just went over it—how does it functionally work? This amendment removes the cap on the amount of money Gulf States receive from energy production on the Outer Continental Shelf and makes more leases eligible for the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act, or, as it is known, GOMESA, which thereby generates more money for a State like Louisiana.

Simultaneously, by raising this cap, it puts more money into the current fund for the Land and Water Conservation Fund. But, under the Great American Outdoors Act, the Land and Water Conservation Fund is getting an additional \$900 million a year in perpetuity automatically, and Congress has no role over it after this bill passes. Any dollars that would additionally go to LWCF, above the \$125 million it currently receives, would instead flow into a coastal fund, and that is the coastal fund that would help resiliency in all of our coastal States.

Now, I can't say how other States would spend it, but in Louisiana, our State constitution requires that if we get money from GOMESA, from the revenue sharing, that we in Louisiana dedicate these funds to turning the tide against land loss to preserve our wonderful and ecologically diverse wetlands, which also blunts the effects of hurricanes.

Now some might say: Why should anybody get this? It is Federal land. Well, I will point out that there is actually a cap on the amount of revenue the Gulf States receive from oil and gas revenue and from oil and gas production in the Federal lands off our coast, which limits the amount we can receive. There is no such limit in any other State.

If you are in a Federal land in New Mexico, you get 50 percent of the total generated. I think I read last year that New Mexico got \$1.5 billion from shared royalty leases on Federal lands within New Mexico. I think Louisiana got \$95 million. Wait—\$1.5 billion and \$95 million. We got a coast; they don't. We got people; they don't. We are funding 90 percent of the Great American Outdoors Act; they are funding a fraction.

Now you know why my parish residents feel anger that the needs of our vanishing coastline are totally ignored, and not just ours but those of every coastal parish—those coastal parishes in which 42 percent of Americans live and who are wondering: Do we care more about parks than we do about people?

We can care about parks, but shouldn't we also care about people?

Now, the coastal amendment, if added to the base bill, I can say, would pass with bipartisan support. I will say once more: It does not take any money away from the billions going to public parks in the Great American Outdoors Act. It doesn't take any money away from buying more lands out in the Western States. What I am trying to do is to bring fairness and equity into this equation by directing dollars to all coastal States, including the Great Lakes States. Senators from both sides of this aisle represent States which would benefit. It doesn't matter whether you are from a coastal State. You would recognize that it is wise public policy.

I suggested inserting the coastal amendment into the Great American Outdoors Act, into the base bill. The COASTAL Act was originally written with DOUG JONES, the Senator from Alabama, and had bipartisan support in the Energy Committee from Senator ANGUS KING from Maine.

Since, the coastal amendment has been modified. My Democratic colleague, SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, who is from Rhode Island—a State greatly threatened by rising sea levels—suggested that we create revenue sharing for wind energy. As we look forward into the next economy, we see that offshore wind will be a significant source of electricity for States like his, in Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and other New England States. So we would use revenue sharing from offshore wind energy to also contribute to coastal resiliency.

Now, that still is a little ways off. At first, it would principally be additional dollars coming from the Gulf Coast, but ultimately it would be the north and the south combining to benefit all coastal States, whether they were in the Northeast or in the South. Wherever you live on a coastline, including the Great Lakes, it would benefit from inserting the COASTAL Act into the great American Outdoors Act.

All I can say is, I would like to think that Senators—Republicans and Democrats alike—can see what is at risk: lives, jobs, and energy production. In funding for the Great American Outdoors Act, if you don't give a twit about the coastal areas, at least you are concerned about the funding for the act. Again, if we only invest where people vacation instead of investing in coastal resiliency, we do a disservice to the States, in those coastal States is where over 80 percent of Americans live.

Now, by the way, we can have common ground on issues of the environment. Earlier today, one of the Great American Outdoors Act authors, Senator GARDNER from Colorado, addressed this Chamber to say that his bill is smart conservation. Let me say that two of my best friends here are Senator GARDNER and Senator DAINES, and we are on the other side of this issue. But if you are from their State, my gosh, you just better give them a real shout-

out, because they have done a good job for your State. I don't feel good about the job for my State of Louisiana, but, you, by golly, better feel good about the job they have done for your State.

I would add that I think that Senator GARDNER's bill and my amendment work together on important issues of conservation and environment. I am told that 800 environmental groups support the Great American Outdoors Act as is and don't want any changes. I find that hard to believe. Is there really an environmental group out there that doesn't want to invest in coastal resiliency, that hasn't looked at the devastation of Katrina, of Rita, of Ike, of Maria, of Irma, and doesn't recognize that taking care of the environment is essential to our coastal regions? I am sure that if you poll those 800 groups and say we are going to spend additional dollars on those coastal parishes where Americans live, they would stand up and applaud. And if we put it in there, they will support this bill.

Now, I will say the GOMESA States is an irony here. They are often at odds with these environmental groups because the environmental groups claim that GOMESA incentivizes drilling or that we are spending money in a revenue sharing program funded by oil and gas, but, needless to say, that argument is out of the window.

The Great American Outdoors Act has the exact same funding source as GOMESA, and it is supported by all the anti-fossil fuel environmental groups because they want to take care of parks. Well, I want to take care of people, and I also want to take care of your parks, but my first priority is that working family. My first priority is that family which wakes up every day and struggles to make ends meet and wants their child to have a better future than they, but then they learn there is high water coming and they might be flooded and that better future is flooded away. I care about that family. We, in the Senate, should care about that family. We should not care for parks more than we care for people.

The coastal amendment supports the environment. As I said earlier, it goes directly to coastal resiliency initiatives that include recovering lost land and supporting the wetlands. I am not at odds with environmentalists. As I said before, every environmentalist is going to support restoring the wetlands of Louisiana. I am just asking that we be allowed to support that coastal environment. For people who live along the coast, these coastal systems are the ecosystems that make our homes special. It is why I look at those marshes in Louisiana, and, to me, they are just as beautiful as that grizzly bear and that pine tree and that majestic mountain. It is all part of God's creation, if we don't let it wash away. This is more than potholes. It is more than leaky toilets and leaky roofs. It is about preservation and about it not being here in 50 years if we do not act

now. We spend billions on the environment where people vacation but not anything on the environment where they live.

So here is where we are in this debate. We have established that over 80 percent of our fellow Americans live in coastal States and stand to benefit very little from the Great American Outdoors Act. Oh, yes, if you live in the beach of North Carolina, you are kind of glad that the people in the Rocky Mountains and the Smoky National Parks have a little bit more tourism, but your home is the one being washed away. And if you are in Seal Beach and your taxes are going up because they have to build a bigger and bigger berm every year because the winter storms are that much worse, or you are kind of glad in Yosemite—I am glad Yosemite is getting money, by the way. I love Yosemite. But on the other hand, it doesn't help you with your taxes. It doesn't help you with your building getting flooded. You begin to wonder, if you see a picture of Venice, is that what your home will look like in 25 years—a major investment of your life getting flooded so regularly that it loses all its value. Apparently, that is what they are looking at in Miami. That is what we hear in this debate.

We have established that most of the country that lives in coastal States stands to benefit very little from the Great American Outdoors Act. We have established that failing to invest in coastal resiliency leads to death—death. Think about Hurricane Katrina. It threatens millions of jobs and billions of economic activity. We have established that both the coastal amendment and the Great American Outdoors Act help the environment. They really do. We have established that that one amendment, the coastal amendment, added to the Great American Outdoors Act can address funding and equity—stop. Here we have billions for the Great American Outdoors Act and here will be a few million. So there isn't any semblance of equality between the funding that I am proposing for coastal resiliency where 42 percent of Americans live and the billions going to the parks that we visit occasionally, but at least there is some money going for coastal resiliency where most Americans live.

From where I am standing, including the coastal amendment in the Great American Outdoors Act is a win-win. The Great American Outdoors Act passes with funding to address the needs of national parks and funding for coastal resiliency. It has bipartisan support. Democrats and Republicans can come together on it. The cause is just. If you just think about that family, the cause is just. The support is there, but the ability to vote on it is not.

The bill's authors will not allow this amendment to come to the floor included in their package. This is a disservice to the 82 percent of the country

who live in coastal States and face the threats of hurricanes and flooding. I am asking that the Senate do what the Founders envisioned us doing. Consider ideas, vote on them, try and expand ourselves beyond our narrow parochial interest, and think about all Americans, not just those Americans that live in your State. Put people before parks.

That is not to say, with 20/20 hindsight, we know we should have invested in coastal resiliency because look at the pricetag of not doing so, because we have already seen that pricetag. Instead, let's think, going forward, that we are going to make the investment now because we see that investing can save millions—if not billions—of dollars, and I only speak of dollars. I should speak only of lives because sometimes I just think we take lives for granted. I don't. We should invest in coastal resiliency most of all to protect those lives, those families, and those futures.

I hope that we will include this. I hope the idea will be considered. It is germane. It is bipartisan. It will pass.

I appreciate the opportunity to speak this evening about something very important to me and those whom I represent. We know the gulf coast is paying for the bill, and it is not getting a fair share. All I am asking is that we amend the underlying bill to spend money now on resiliency projects so we don't spend billions later on flood and storm recovery and perhaps thousands on funerals.

It deserves a vote. It would pass. It protects so many lives and takes nothing away from the Great American Outdoors Act, but it does establish that we in the Senate care about people and parks and that we not just care about where we vacation but we wish to protect where we live. I encourage my colleagues to consider what I have said tonight.

If you have heard this by other means, contact your Senator. Ask them what they think. I would hope they would ask whether it is appropriate for our country to spend billions on vacation spots, which are wonderful vacation spots, but spend nothing to prevent flood and devastation.

Scripture says that if you build your home on shifting sand, the house will collapse. It is better to build it on a firm foundation.

I would also add once more that we built this funding on the shifting sand—the literal shifting sand—of a Louisiana coastline, which is smaller since I began to speak, by about the size of a football field. That shifting sand supporting that infrastructure, which is shifting out into the Gulf, will erode not just my coastline but also the ability to pay for the Great American Outdoors Act. Even if someone does not care about the 42 percent of the Americans who live in coastal parishes and counties, they should care about that.

I hope others join my coalition. I call upon the bill's authors to include this

in the underlying amendment. It needs to be considered for the good of all Americans who call the coast home. I think it needs to be considered for the good of America.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GARDNER). The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I want to congratulate my colleague from Louisiana, one of the most diligent Members of the U.S. Senate. He complimented the occupant of the Chair, Senator GARDNER from Colorado, for doing a great job for his State. I think Senator CASSIDY did a good job advocating for his State. But he left a little bit of perspective out on what he offered, and I would like to add some perspective.

As he was speaking, I was thinking about the creation of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. This occurred in the 1930s. During the Great Depression, when everyone was worried about a job and everyone was worried about our country, the people of North Carolina and Tennessee appropriated through their State legislatures \$2 million each. Then John D. Rockefeller, Jr., heard about the effort, and he said: "I will give \$5 million if the States will match it."

So you had four—two from North Carolina, two from Tennessee—and then they set out to raise another \$1 million. They raised that from schoolchildren. They collected pennies and dimes and quarters in the middle of the Depression to create the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

At the time they did that, what did the people of Tennessee and North Carolina do? They gave it to the people of the United States of America. They gave it to all of us. They didn't charge for it. In fact, they said: "The only way we will give it to you is if you will not put an interest fee on it."

They didn't say: "Only Tennesseans, only North Carolinians can come." They didn't say: "We don't want anybody from Louisiana coming to the national park and the Great Smokies or from Colorado or from any other State." They gave it to the people of this country.

And what has happened? There are now 14 million people a year who come to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. We only have 6 or 7 million in Tennessee, so we have a lot of people. We have a lot of interlopers, don't we? We have a lot of people who don't live where our park is, who use it. We are happy about that. We are proud of it. We are glad we gave it to the country, and we are glad Ken Burns includes it among one of the great treasures that he calls America's Best Idea. It is a park for the country given by the people of Tennessee and North Carolina and the schoolchildren, and we didn't object to everybody enjoying it.

I believe I voted every single time that the coastal States have been deci-

mated by a hurricane. The Senator from Louisiana talked about \$685 billion. I didn't say, as a Senator from Tennessee: "You know, we don't have a coast. We don't have an ocean. It wasn't us. Hurricanes don't come here. Don't charge me."

We gladly paid our share of the bill because we are part of one country. We are part of one country. That was four people, right? Six hundred and eighty-five billion dollars for people who were hurt, not just paid for by people who live on the coast but by people who live in Colorado and Tennessee and Iowa and places where there is not a coast—because we are one country.

So the idea that we should only favor those items that come just from our State is not a very good argument for coastal resiliency because, if the Senator from Louisiana wants to bring that bill up based on the argument he made, why should anybody who doesn't live on a coast vote for it? I voted for it in committee because I thought it was an important issue, even though we don't have a coast. He is a very skillful advocate, a very diligent Senator. He is doing a good job of talking for his State, but he is missing the point.

His other point is, let's add it to this bill. Well, the Senate floor is littered with bills that never made it through here because they got loaded down with too many good ideas. People say: "Well, there is a train that is likely to get to the station, let's load it up." And what happens? It just slows down, and after a while, it stops, and nothing happens. Because people have said: "If I don't get what I want on the train, I am not for anything."

That is why the Land and Water Conservation Fund has never been permanently funded. This was an idea Congress passed in 1964, 60 years ago. In 1985 and 1986, I was chairman of President Reagan's Commission on America's Outdoors. It looked at what we should do in the great American outdoors. We didn't say the great Tennessee outdoors or the great Louisiana outdoors or the great Colorado outdoors. We looked at the great American outdoors. We looked at the great American outdoors and said: "What can we do so our children and grandchildren can enjoy what we have enjoyed?"

The people of Wyoming aren't the only ones who enjoy Yellowstone—or the people of Montana. Three or four million people a year go to a western park like that. They travel from all over the country to go there.

When I look at the Great Smokies in football season, when we play LSU, those Tigers arrive on Tuesday. Well, the game is not until Saturday. Why do they come? Because they want to go to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. We don't put up a big sign and say: "Sorry, you didn't pay for it. We gave it to the country. It is not for you." They like it, and we like to have them there.

So the point, though, was that sometimes you have a good idea, and if you add one more good idea to a piece of legislation, it sinks the whole ship. That would be the case here. The Senator from Louisiana is talking about a very big idea: What do we do about revenue sharing from oil and gas revenues and coastal resiliency and climate change? He didn't say too much about climate change, but if his sea level is rising, it is probably because of climate change, so maybe we ought to think about that too. So if we are going to bring up this whole issue of coastal resiliency, my guess is that some Senators will say: "All right, let's talk about a moratorium on oil and gas drilling. Let's talk about a fairer share."

Ninety percent of the drilling in Alaska goes to Alaska. Fifty percent of the drilling in Wyoming goes to Wyoming. Twenty-seven percent of the drilling 3 miles off the coast of Louisiana goes to Louisiana. If it is in the Federal lands beyond 3 miles, 37½ percent is split up among four States. That is the area where the oil comes from, but that land belongs to all 46 States. So we could have a pretty good debate about that, about the moratorium.

Then someone would say: "What about the oceans? The oceans deserve some of the care that comes from drilling in the oceans, drilling in the water, so let's talk about the oceans." If we got into a moratorium on oil and gas drilling, adding the oceans, changing revenue sharing, there is no more difficult issue in the U.S. Senate than to adjust and say: "Well, Louisiana gets 27 percent, maybe it ought to go to 40. Alaska gets 90, maybe Wyoming should go up to 90." There is no more difficult issue than that to deal with. It sunk a lot of bills to bring that up.

I remember the member of the congregation who was disappointed because the preacher only preached a verse from the Gospel of Luke. Well, you can't preach the whole Bible in one sermon, and we can't pass every good idea in one bill. In fact, we have two bills together here that are, by themselves, about enough to stop the train before it gets to the station.

Everybody here knows that it has been since 1964 that people have tried to pass the Land and Water Conservation Fund funding, even though the idea—money from environmental burden, that is drilling offshore—for an environmental benefit—that is to let States and the Federal Government buy land that is treasured, as Senator DAINES from Montana says, 80 percent of the access good fishing in Montana comes with Land and Water Conservation Fund money. So that bill has been out there a long time.

How long have we tried to fix the national parks and the boat ramps and the wildlife refuges and the roads and the national forests and the Indian schools, which are in shambles in many cases? Decades. We have been going

and using up our parks and our public lands, and we haven't been maintaining them.

Again, you don't just get to go to the public land in Kansas, if you are from Kansas, or to the Great Smokies, if you are from Tennessee or North Carolina, or to Yellowstone, if you are from Wyoming or Montana—all of us go to that, and we have let them run down. That is about people. That is about people.

Here we are in this big COVID-19 crisis. What does everyone want to do today more than anything else? Get outdoors. Get out of the house. Here you are, cooped up with teenagers or Grandma or all of you, just a few people sitting there for 3 months. You want a little space.

The people who go to these open spaces are the people who live on the coast. They live in the big cities. They want a little variety in their lives, and we are glad for them to have it. When they go, they don't want a bathroom that doesn't work or a visitors center that is in shambles. They don't want a pothole in the road or a trail that is worn down. They would like to have a place they could enjoy, that is in good shape, and they can go home.

I think about the campground on Chilhowee Mountain just outside the Smokies. There might be a few campers from Louisiana who like to come up there whenever we play LSU. I don't know, but probably there are. Well, it has been closed for 2 or 3 years because the sewage system doesn't work. That is at least 500 families who don't get to have the opportunity to do that.

I am sympathetic to the Senator from Louisiana. I think he is one of our most able Senators. He is making a very forceful argument for a real problem: coastal resiliency. But I don't buy this idea that just because this bill doesn't fix that problem we should jeopardize this bill.

Think about it. We have the President of the United States, who personally is interested in this bill. His Secretary of the Interior came down to Tennessee to see me 2½ years ago. It is the first administration that said: "We are going to look at the money we get from energy exploration, and after we give some to Louisiana and after we give some to Wyoming and after we give some to Alaska and the other coastal States, we are going to take half of what is left for 5 years, and we are going to use it to fix all of those things that need to be fixed in our national treasures."

I said: "OK, if the President is going to support it and his Office of Management and Budget is going to be the first Office of Management and Budget to allow money to be spent in that way, I am going to get behind it."

Then I came up here and fell into some pretty good company; the Senator from Colorado, the Senator from Montana, Senator WARNER from Virginia, and Senator PORTMAN from Ohio were already working on the subject. Senator KING of Maine, Senator HEIN-

RICH, Senator CANTWELL were involved in the land and water. It became absolutely clear that, if we didn't put these two bills together, none of them—neither of them—would pass. If they didn't go together, neither of them would pass.

We consulted with all of the people in the Senate who were working on this. There wasn't complete agreement. There were a number of Senators who had other amendments that they would have liked to have, Senators whom I greatly respect and whose amendments I would probably support by the one. But as we looked at it and as we consulted with the more than 800 groups—the sportsmen, the anglers, the environmental groups—we all agreed that our only chance to get both bills was to put them together and say to the Senate: "Let's vote on it; let's send it to the House to see if they will vote on it; and after 60 years of trying, maybe we can get a good result."

I think that is why we got 80 votes. The first time, this came up on a procedural vote, and 79 the second time it came up.

A number of Senators have gone home tonight because this is a late-night vote. The reason we are having a late-night vote is because those who agree with Senator CASSIDY have insisted on taking the maximum amount of time. That is their right to do, so we are here. If we succeed tonight, then we will have three votes on Monday, all of which are very important votes. So we are close to getting this train to the station.

Senator CASSIDY has made an eloquent appeal to add an idea that is good, but an idea that is big and complex and deserves its own day in the Sun, just as it came to our Energy Committee, of which I sit and he sits. I voted for it at that time, but we just can't add it to this bill and get this train to the station. That is the fact of the matter.

As much as I respect him and his ideas, I hope that he and others who agree with him would say: "Look, this is our one chance to get this kind of funding to make our national parks and all the rest of our public lands—the boat ramps, the trails, the roads, the sewage—our one chance to begin to fix the maintenance over a 5-year period of time instead of 10, 15, 25 years, or never. It is our one chance to do that."

I am sure it is our one chance to get the Land and Water Conservation Fund permanently funded, as Congress agreed to do in 1964 and as President Reagan's Commission on America's Outdoors, which I chaired in 1985 and 1986, recommended as its No. 1 priority.

Let's not try to preach the whole Bible in one sermon. We have two good big ideas. Together, they make the most important piece of conservation legislation in a half century.

You say: "Well, Senators are always exaggerating." I don't try to exaggerate too much, and I defy anyone to point me another bill that does more. I

know we have been working on land and water since 1964. That is more than a half century. I know that this deferred maintenance has been building up for a long, long time. It is the single biggest problem the national parks and our public lands have.

I think 95 percent of the American people would wonder why we can't pass it in 5 minutes. The reason is, there are lots of good ideas here, and if you load them all up in the same wheelbarrow or on the same train, the wheelbarrow collapses, and the train doesn't get to the station. That is where we are. That is where we are.

I hope that, with respect to the good ideas advocated tonight by the Senator from Louisiana—I know he will keep at it. I am on the same committee he is. I have voted for his idea before. I think it deserves its day in the Sun, and I will help him do that, but I would like to ask him to help us finish the job here on the most important piece of conservation legislation. I want him to know that those LSU Tigers are always welcome in the Great Smoky Mountains, even if we bought it and paid for it and gave it to the whole country.

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

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

MORNING BUSINESS

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I was necessarily absent for rollcall vote No. 17, the motion to invoke cloture on the Gardner amendment in the nature of a substitute, No. 1617, to H.R. 1957. Had I been present for the vote, I would have voted yea.

REMEMBERING HECKY POWELL

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, even during this pandemic, people have been forming lines—6 feet apart and masked—at the corner of Emerson and Green Bay Road in Evanston, IL, to pick up Hecky's Barbeque. They come for the pulled pork, chicken wings, and especially the sauce. And for years, Hecky Powell was there with his family's recipes, his hard work, his smile, and his wisdom. Sadly, on May 22, Hecky passed away from pneumonia after a diagnosis of COVID-19. He used to say that people kept coming in for the sauce—that is what made the food great. Well, part of what made Evanston great was Hecky. For 37 years, he brought good barbeque, leadership, and kindness to Evanston, and today we pay tribute to him.

Harry William "Hecky" Powell was born in 1948 at Cook County Hospital.