

just while we were standing around waiting to board the boat.

The sights and sounds of a healthy marsh were an encouraging reminder of nature's ability to find a way to not only survive but to flourish if we give her a chance.

In Wyoming—well, don't get me wrong—climate change isn't always a popular subject. The State is basically run by the fossil fuel industry, but there I met a younger generation that really gets it. I will not forget the determination of leading winter sports athletes in Jackson fighting to preserve their winters; nor, in Lander, the impassioned argument for climate action from a young outdoor instructor from NOLS, National Outdoor Leadership School; nor, out at their campsite, the fire-lit, passionate faces of Central Wyoming College students on their way up to take glacier measurements, who well understand the stakes of climate change for their future and the future of the State they love.

Typically, these climate road trips that I do land me in States where the fight for climate change may need a little, say, boost. The opposite was true in Colorado. It is a State on a major climate winning streak: a State of good climate bills passed during the last legislative session; their biggest public utility transitioning to renewable energy, building impressive renewable energy and electric vehicle infrastructure; and leading research institutes bringing new renewable energy technologies to the marketplace.

The year 2019 also showed polling that showed climate action was becoming a top issue for American voters everywhere. A big part is young voters—and especially young Republicans. More than three-fourths of all millennials and a majority of millennial Republicans agree on the need for climate action. Last year, a Republican former Member of Congress wrote about climate change: My party will never earn the votes of millennials unless it gets serious about finding solutions.

It is not just younger voters. Americans of all ages and political stripes favor many of the solutions that scientists and economists say are needed to tackle climate change. An October 2019 Pew poll found that two-thirds of Americans believe the Federal Government needs to do more to combat climate change. The same poll showed 77 percent of Americans believe the United States ought to prioritize developing alternative energy over fossil fuels.

So the decades-long fossil fuel campaign of obstruction and lies and denial will not be tolerated much longer.

In New England, in the springtime, a moment comes when the roof of your house warms up enough to send the snow sliding down off the roof in a big whumpf. The snow may have piled up slowly, over weeks and months, but it comes down all at once in a whumpf.

The fossil fuel industry and its network of front groups and trade associa-

tions have spent years piling up their crooked apparatus of climate obstruction. Increasingly, their evil behavior is facing blowback from the public and from regulators and from investors. Alarm bells are ringing ever louder from all quarters about the economic risks.

Renewable energy and other green technologies are ever more cost competitive. Awareness of climate change dangers is ever growing among the American people. These are all signs that the thaw, the whumpf, is near, and 2020 could be the moment.

I know things in Washington can seem hopeless, but 2019 gave me some reasons to hope. For 2020, well, it is game on to tear down the crooked castle of climate denial and solve this problem while still we can.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. MCSALLY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding the provisions of rule XXII, at 11 a.m. tomorrow, the Senate vote on the motions to invoke cloture on Executive Calendar Nos. 329, 462, and 525, in the order listed; further, that if cloture is invoked on the nominations, all postcloture time be expired at 5 p.m. tomorrow and the Senate vote on confirmation of the nominations with no intervening action or debate; finally, that if confirmed, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 554.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Paul J. Ray, of Tennessee, to be Ad-

ministrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget.

#### CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. McCONNELL. I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

#### CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Paul J. Ray, of Tennessee, to be Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget.

Mitch McConnell, John Boozman, James M. Inhofe, John Barrasso, Roy Blunt, Todd Young, Shelley Moore Capito, Michael B. Enzi, Lisa Murkowski, John Cornyn, Steve Daines, Lindsey Graham, Chuck Grassley, Josh Hawley, Roger F. Wicker, Marsha Blackburn.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call be waived.

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

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session for a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

#### VOTE EXPLANATION

Ms. HARRIS. Madam President, I was absent but had I been present, I would have voted no on rollcall vote No. 416 the confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 465, Anuraag Singhal, of Florida, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Florida.

Madam President, I was absent but had I been present, I would have voted no on rollcall vote No. 417 the confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 466, Karen Spencer Marston, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

Madam President, I was absent but had I been present, I would have voted no on rollcall vote No. 418 the confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 480, Daniel Mack Traynor, of North Dakota, to be United States District Judge for the District of North Dakota.

Madam President, I was absent but had I been present, I would have voted no on rollcall vote No. 419 the confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 481, Jodi W. Dishman, of Oklahoma, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Oklahoma.

Madam President, I was absent but had I been present, I would have voted no on rollcall vote No. 420 the confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 490, John M. Gallagher, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

Madam President, I was absent but had I been present, I would have voted no on rollcall vote No. 422 the confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 354, Mary Kay Vyskocil, of New York, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of New York.

Madam President, I was absent but had I been present, I would have voted yes on rollcall vote No. 423 the confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 383, Kea Whetzal Riggs, of New Mexico, to be United States District Judge for the District of New Mexico.

Madam President, I was absent but had I been present, I would have voted yes on rollcall vote No. 424 the confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 234, Robert J. Colville, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Pennsylvania.

#### REMEMBERING DAVID BLEE

Mr. RISCH. Madam President, I wish to commemorate the life of David Blee, who tragically passed away on December 29, 2019, at the age of 66. David was the founder and president of the United States Nuclear Industry Council, USNIC. During his long and distinguished career in the nuclear industry, David concentrated on nuclear supply chain and reactor technology and actively worked to increase support for nuclear power in the United States and abroad. David also worked with the National Laboratories, including Idaho National Laboratory, often running conferences in conjunction with them. At the time of his passing, David held an appointment to the U.S. Department of Commerce's Civil Nuclear Trade Advisory Committee, CINTAC, an achievement that spoke to his incredible expertise.

David graduated from Dickinson College in Pennsylvania with a degree in economics, but he soon began working in politics and public service. After managing several political campaigns, David became chief of staff to former Representative and Senator Connie Mack while Mack served in the House of Representatives. David then served as a Deputy Assistant Secretary and, later, Director of Public Affairs for the U.S. Department of Energy during the Reagan administration. He also served as the executive vice president for NAC International, a U.S.-based energy services and technology company, where he directed the company's worldwide consulting group and marketing and business development portfolios.

One of David's best attributes was his ability to work with people and bring organizations together. Composed of over 80 companies, USNIC represents

the "who's who" of the nuclear energy supply chain, including technology developers, fuel cycle companies, and others that demonstrate the importance of maintaining the nuclear industry. These companies working in conjunction would not have been possible without the dedicated effort of David Blee. In July of last year, I was honored to be presented with the U.S. Nuclear Energy Distinguished Leadership Award by USNIC. The coalition of groups attending that award ceremony personified the great unifying effect that David had on the nuclear industry. He was a leader and a motivator, and his advocacy for the nuclear industry will be remembered. I am grateful for the work that he completed during his lifetime and his lasting legacy as a respected leader in the nuclear field.

#### RECOGNIZING THE USS "PITTSBURGH"

Mr. TOOMEY. Madam President, I wish to recognize the service of the USS *Pittsburgh* and her crew for our country since the ship's commissioning on November 23, 1985.

A *Los Angeles*-class, fast-attack nuclear submarine, the *Pittsburgh* served for 35 years as an anti-submarine, strike, and anti-surface ship warfare vessel that also specialized in surveillance and reconnaissance. The *Pittsburgh* deployed during Operation Desert Storm in 1991 and again during Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2002, conducting Tomahawk missile strikes in both campaigns. While most of the vessel's missions remain classified, the *Pittsburgh* logged over 1,000 dives all over the world, including in the Arctic, Atlantic, Indian, and Pacific oceans.

The *Pittsburgh* was the U.S. Navy's fourth ship to be named after the Steel City and during its time in service retained a number of connections to its namesake. Over the years, multiple civic organizations have used the ship for outreach efforts, fundraisers, and crew visits to increase the public's appreciation for the Navy and the submarine service. Local groups, such as the Pittsburgh Council of the Navy League and the Leetsdale, PA, chapter of the U.S. Submarine Veterans Incorporated, have kept in regular contact with the ship's crew. Another local organization, called the Pittsburgh Foundation, even administers a scholarship fund for the *Pittsburgh's* crew and their families.

The vessel's motto, "Heart of Steel," paid homage to the city's cultural and industrial roots. The slogan is apt given that researchers at the Bettis Atomic Power Laboratory in West Mifflin, PA, just outside of Pittsburgh, are credited with designing portions of the nuclear technology outfitted on nuclear-propelled Navy vessels, including the *Pittsburgh*.

On February 25, 2019, the submarine completed her final deployment, during which she traveled over 39,000 nautical miles and conducted three foreign port

visits. Subsequently, the *Pittsburgh* departed Groton, CT, for Bremerton, WA, for her final homeport change. On this final voyage, she became the first submarine of her variant to complete an arctic transit. She is now undergoing the months-long decommissioning and inactivation process that will culminate in a ceremony on January 17, 2020. I send everyone involved in the ceremony the best of wishes.

After 35 years of distinguished service, I commend the USS *Pittsburgh* and her crew for their sustained commitment to upholding our Nation's defense. I ask all of my colleagues to join me in recognition of the USS *Pittsburgh* upon her inactivation from the Navy.

#### ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

##### REMEMBERING ROBERT L. "RED" MCKINNEY

• Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Madam President, I rise today with a heavy heart to pay tribute to Robert "Red" McKinney, an outstanding friend and public servant. Sadly, Mr. McKinney passed away on December 24, 2019, at the age of 72. He will be remembered for his devotion to East Hampton and his bright, loving nature.

Born in Hartford, CT, Red spent his entire life in East Hampton. He earned his higher education degrees in the State, as well, with an associate's degree from Mitchell College and a bachelor's degree from Central Connecticut State University. Red spent five decades as a chemical specialist, focused in metal working fluids. For 40 years, he and his wife, Anne, co-owned a commercial and residential property acquisition and management company, HTA, LLC.

Outside of his work, Red dedicated himself to supporting his community. Giving back to those around him brought Red an unparalleled joy, dating back to his role as a member of East Hampton Parks and Recreation in the 1970s. He was the youngest member of the East Hampton Board of Selectmen ever elected and proudly served for 4 years. Notably, Red also served as chairman of the East Hampton Democratic Town Committee for 10 years and remained a member for his entire life since 1974.

That same year, he joined the East Hampton Rotary Club, making him the longest tenured member. His impressive level of involvement is also evident through his over four-decade-long role as a charter member of the Old Home Days Association. The association coordinates the annual East Hampton Old Home Day parade—a signature celebratory tradition attended by hundreds of people. As a regular participant in the parade, I saw firsthand the professionalism and dedication that Red brought to that event. He was always a joy to talk with.

Red was especially pleased to have the opportunity to celebrate the people