

even more tools to support children and families who are struggling. It is our duty to nurture and protect all of our country's children, and the Jenna Quinn Law is a strong step to help move us forward in meeting that responsibility.

I urge all of my colleagues to support this legislation and to work together on additional bipartisan measures to protect the safety and well-being of children across the country. Again, I thank my friend from Texas for his leadership in moving this important bill forward, and I look forward continuing to work with him on these issues.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

#### ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the cloture vote on Calendar No. 816, the nomination of Franklin Ulyses Valderrama, be withdrawn and that the Senate proceed to vote on the nomination under the previous order at 11:45 a.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.  
The Senator from Michigan.

#### AGRICULTURE

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I rise to talk about what we need to be doing certainly to support the farmers across our country. I know Republican colleagues spoke just a while ago about the need to refill what we call the CCC to make sure that we are providing the funding for the October payments for the farm bill.

As one of the authors of the farm bill, I certainly know we have to make those payments, and the good news is that there is enough money there now to do that, although we certainly also want to be providing emergency support, disaster support, for growers who have been hit and have had losses as a result of the Trump chaotic trade policies, as a result of what has happened under COVID-19. Our farmers have been hit every which way, including what is happening on climate change and the weather, prices, everything else, and we certainly want to make sure that they have what they need.

I want to raise two points today. One is that in order to do that, the USDA should be focusing on a GAO report that was released on Monday that indicated and actually reaffirmed a report that I released with our Senate Democratic colleagues on the Agricultural Committee that, in fact, the payments going out to farmers have not been fair. They have been picking winners and losers; they have been picking regions in the South, big farms in the South, not over the Midwest or our smaller farmers and over many of those who, frankly, have had the biggest losses.

So when I hear my colleagues talk about the fact that we need to be supporting farmers and we need to make sure that the farm bill payments go

out, I absolutely agree that money is in there right now to do that. If we are going to add other money, I think we ought to be paying attention to what the GAO has now affirmed, which is we should be making sure we are funding those with losses—those who need the help the most in these chaotic times for farmers.

But something has now come up today that is even more alarming to me, and that is related to what the Trump administration appears to be considering right now, which is to take at least \$300 million in funds, cash aid, and give it to U.S. oil refineries out of the funds we are talking about—that my colleagues just talked about—that were supposed to be going to farmers.

We have had 3½ years of this administration siding with big oil companies over our ethanol producers. And, by the way, ethanol biofuels are about jobs, about clean energy, and about supporting small towns in rural communities. Then, just this week, at the very last minute—it is election year—they announce that they are going to make a decision that will help ethanol and be able to deal with some of the waivers that they have been doing for the oil companies. They announced that earlier this week, and then, guess what. Through the back door, they are going to take—if this is accurate in Reuters—\$300 million away from our farmers to give back to Big Oil.

Every time we turn around, they are deciding to support Big Oil over farmers in our rural communities. I want to know from colleagues—I had hoped to get to the floor to ask the question directly, and I am certainly going to ask it of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle who I know support ethanol and biofuels—when they are advocating for more money in the CCC, are they advocating for \$300 million going to the oil companies? Because, oh, heavenly days, we couldn't really side with ethanol.

You know, if we really sided with ethanol, they wouldn't be worried about the oil companies who have been fighting this every step of the way, fighting the efforts to support ethanol and biofuels, and fighting the efforts that are critical for jobs in rural communities in my State and all across the country. If they really meant it, they wouldn't be trying, through the back door, to find some way to go back and get hundreds of millions of dollars for the oil companies so they wouldn't be upset.

So I find this pretty outrageous today. We are certainly going to dig deep, and, certainly, we are in the process right now of putting together a letter to the USDA. But the reality is that over and over again there is a lot of lip service for farmers and a lot of money going to Big Oil, and there is a lot of lip service to small and medium-sized farmers across Michigan and across the country, while 95 percent of these payments that are being done are going to big operations with political friends in the South.

It is not fair. It is not fair. It is creating a situation where too many family farms are barely making it or, in fact, not making it and having to put the farm up for sale, and that is wrong. It is not good for America. It is not good for diversity in agriculture. We don't need just a few huge farms in America. We need to make sure that we are supporting our small farmers and medium farmers. This is the foundation of so much of the economy in small towns like where I grew up in Northern Michigan.

What we have seen is an administration that has chosen to basically throw the farm bill out the window. My colleagues talked about the great bipartisan farm bill. I agree. As the partner with Senator ROBERTS in putting that together, I agree. It was a great bipartisan effort that the USDA has basically torn up and thrown out the window, and instead of creating markets for our farmers and supporting them with risk management, now it is back to big government payments. By the way, let's make sure they are focused on our friends. That is basically what the report from the GAO has shown us.

I am very concerned that one more time there is a lot of lip service for farmers, and we are going to see—and we are certainly going to stop this, by the way—\$300 million going to oil companies out of our agriculture support fund. It is stunning to me.

By the way, I would just conclude by saying that the Secretary of Agriculture has said he didn't have the authority to help the ethanol producers, couldn't help our corn growers, couldn't help our biofuel and soybeans growers—he didn't have the authority. He didn't have the authority to help our farmers, but somehow he has the authority to dip into agriculture support funds to be able to fund \$300 million to Big Oil. This is wrong.

I hope my colleagues on the other side of the aisle who were here speaking earlier about the importance of supporting agriculture will join us in saying to the USDA: You do not have the authority to use dollars for producers that have been hit so hard by the chaos of their trade policies and every other effort that has gone on in the real world that has lowered their prices and created havoc for our farmers. You don't have the right to take their funds and give them to Big Oil.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

#### WILDFIRES

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about what we are seeing in this country in the West with the horrific wildfires that are happening right now. I have to say, so many of my colleagues have been speaking out, and rightfully so. My heart, along with all of theirs, goes out to everyone who has been affected by the fires raging across the West and, most of all, to those who have lost members of their families or their homes.

You know, I am thinking of the hundreds of thousands of people in Oregon under evacuation orders, of the brave firefighters in California who are battling flames in the middle of a pandemic, of Nevadans whose skies are blanketed with hazardous smoke—everyone in the West who is pooling all of their efforts and resources to support one another from Washington to Oregon, to California, to Nevada—everywhere that we have seen.

I also want to honor the efforts of two courageous pilots who died in a crash over Caliente, NV, in July while dropping fire retardant on the Bishop Fire. David Blake Haynes and Scott Thomas lost their lives while protecting the people of Nevada, and I join all Nevadans in sharing my condolences with their families.

You know, Americans are up against the brutal reality of the climate crisis. Science tells us that climate change is making the West hotter and drier and contributing to wildfires. Scientists have been sending a consistent message about climate change for the past 30 years. In the entire Western United States, we have seen just some of the dire effects scientists have predicted. That is why we need Federal action to slow the very clear effects of climate change.

We have seen those effects in my home State of Nevada where, this year alone, almost a quarter million acres have burned so far. Since I have been in the Senate, over 2½ million acres in Nevada have burned in tragedies like the Poeyville Fire, the South Sugarloaf Fire, the Range 2 Fire, and the Martin Fire, which was the State's largest fire in our country. That is why the entire Nevada delegation has worked so hard to get Nevada the resources it needs to prepare for these fires, combat them when they occur, and rebuild afterward.

We have helped get funds to the University of Nevada, Reno, for its ALERTWildfire Program, which uses state-of-the-art cameras to monitor the fires. We have requested that the Nevada Air National Guard get the tools it needs to combat these fires, including C-130J aircraft that could fight fires all over the West. Yet, inexplicably, this request was turned down earlier this year.

Along with my colleagues in the Senate, we have worked to pass a bill to create a permanent Forest Service contingency account so that Federal agencies aren't left empty-handed when they need the money the most.

Last summer, I convened the first of its kind wildfire summit in Nevada. I was honored to join our firefighters, our ranchers, our conservationists, our scientists, our power companies, and representatives of government agencies in thinking through new ways to coordinate and collaborate around how to address these wildfires.

There is so much that we can do working together—from developing innovative digital platforms to monitor

the fire to funding research, to restoring native plants, to helping neighborhoods plan for and adapt to fire seasons. We need to make our farms and landscapes more resilient. We need to preserve our national treasures and improve the health and well-being of those who live in our cities and rural areas alike because the truth is that it is not getting cooler.

Anyone in Los Angeles, which saw temperatures of 120 degrees Fahrenheit this month, or in Las Vegas, which hit 113 degrees in July, can tell you that. Taking climate seriously shouldn't be a partisan issue. This is about safeguarding property, protecting local economies, and saving lives—lives of first responders who have too much to do with too few resources and lives of civilians throughout Nevada and the West frightened by what they are seeing literally in their backyards.

So I plan to listen to what the scientists are telling us. I am listening to Nevadans in places like Winnemucca and Elko, where ranchers and local officials have lived through these fires. I am listening to Nevada's Tribal leaders, whose people have been stewards of the land for millennia, and to other communities of color that are among the hardest hit when disaster strikes. And, yes, I am listening to my colleagues who have devastating stories of what is happening to their own constituents in their States right now.

The climate crisis is all around us—from the wildfires we are seeing in the West to the hurricanes we are seeing right now in the South. It is time for us to take bipartisan action, address the climate crisis, and make sure we are doing what we do best: funding short-term and long-term policies and goals to address these issues.

I look forward to working with my colleagues around the States.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the vote that has been scheduled for 11:45 begin immediately.

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

#### VOTE ON VALDERRAMA NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Valderrama nomination?

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR), the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO), and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS),

the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Arizona (Ms. SINEMA) are necessarily absent.

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

The result was announced—yeas 68, nays 26, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 182 Ex.]

#### YEAS—68

Alexander	Grassley	Reed
Baldwin	Hassan	Risch
Bennet	Heinrich	Roberts
Blumenthal	Hirono	Romney
Blunt	Hyde-Smith	Rosen
Booker	Inhofe	Schatz
Brown	Jones	Schumer
Cantwell	Kaine	Shaheen
Cardin	Kennedy	Shelby
Carper	King	Smith
Casey	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Cassidy	Leahy	Tester
Collins	Manchin	Tillis
Coons	Markey	Toomey
Cornyn	McConnell	Udall
Cortez Masto	McSally	Van Hollen
Crapo	Menendez	Warner
Duckworth	Merkley	Warren
Durbin	Murkowski	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Murphy	Wicker
Fischer	Murray	Wyden
Gillibrand	Peters	Young
Graham	Portman	

#### NAYS—26

Barrasso	Ernst	Perdue
Blackburn	Gardner	Rounds
Boozman	Hawley	Rubio
Braun	Hoeven	Sasse
Cotton	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Cramer	Lankford	Scott (SC)
Cruz	Lee	Sullivan
Daines	Loeffler	Thune
Enzi	Paul	

#### NOT VOTING—6

Burr	Harris	Sanders
Capito	Moran	Sinema

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. 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 actions.

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Iain D. Johnston, of Illinois, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Illinois.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

#### CORONAVIRUS

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam President, I don't think anyone would disagree if I said that 2020 has truly been a difficult year. No one could ever have expected what we have faced this year, and it has been a tough one for Tennesseans. We hear about it regularly. We know it is a tough one for constituents and for our citizens all across the country.

The months of lockdowns will constitute a defining moment for multiple generations of Americans. My kids and I were talking about how we think that, in years to come, our grandkids are going to talk about what they did during the COVID summer and how they went to school during the COVID pandemic.