

benefit of the Trump tax cuts was allocated to that hard-hit, struggling group of people.

Again, if you want to look at the priorities of the two parties by analyzing these two sizable bills that each side claims is an accomplishment they are proud of, you just need to look at this particular chart and understand who each side, each party, is battling for and who is each side, each party, trying to help.

Finally, one last chart and then a concluding comment. The last chart shows the poverty rate in this country beginning in 2007. Now, we know we had an economic challenge in 2008, 2009, 2010 that was significant, and then the poverty rate started to come down late in the Obama first term and continued to come down into the Trump first term. But you will see what has happened since 2017 with the passage of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. If that had not happened, the poverty rate would have started to tick back up again after having come down for a number of years.

The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act did have an effect on the poverty rate. It knocked it down a little bit. So there was a positive effect on the poverty rate from the Republican tax proposal, but it was not very significant.

But the projection about the American poverty rate following the passage of the American Rescue Plan is a dramatic reduction—a dramatic reduction of poverty from more than 12 percent down to poverty just above 8 percent—and we would expect to see that by the end of the year.

We are not talking about by the end of the decade or by the end of 5 years or by the end of this Congress. We are talking about by the end of the year.

I think these charts—and, again, particularly this chart that arrays the benefits of both the tax cuts bill of 2017 and the American Rescue Plan and shows to whom the benefits were allocated—speak volumes about two very different philosophies about the economy, two very different philosophies about equity, two very different philosophies about how to truly include everyone in legislation that is big, tough, challenging legislation.

Finally, I will say this as I conclude: The passage and the signing of the American Rescue Plan will also start a realtime economic experiment because the Republican tax plan was done in 2017, and we can measure what that has done and what it hasn't done from 2017 to the beginning of the pandemic. You would not want to include the pandemic necessarily; that wouldn't be a fair way to measure. But if you look at the passage of the tax cut plan in December of 2017, say, to March of 2020, you can get a pretty good view of what that tax bill did or didn't do to the American economy.

Now, in the passage of the American Rescue Plan and the allocation of the benefits of the plan, as demonstrated here, we are going to start the clock on a realtime experiment of a different

economic philosophy. If you take government action and you try to direct the focus of it on middle and lower income people, my surmise is, those dollars will likely be spent; they will be spent in community institutions and stores and purchasing properties or maybe buying a car. They will be spent, and they will have a multiplier effect throughout the economy. They are not going to be used to buy back stock. They are not going to be used or socked away because there is nowhere to spend it.

I think you will see that the spending effect of allocating benefits in this way is going to have a significant, positive effect on the American economy at a time when it needs it and at a time when the people who are most helped are most in need.

We need to build an economy coming out of this crisis that is not only robust but that is also sustainable, meaning environmentally sustainable but sustainable and less subject to boom, busts in areas that leave people high and dry. We also need to build an economy that is more equitable, not measured just by GDP increase or stock market increases that can affect some but measure more in statistics like wages, reduction of poverty, startup of new businesses that demonstrate an economic vitality that is spread broadly among the population.

We are starting the realtime clock on that experiment today. We will be able to compare the value of the \$1.9 trillion tax cut to the \$1.75 trillion American Recovery Plan in years to come. And I am very, very excited to understand that because I think it may point the way forward to additional economic advances that will make us stronger.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

NOMINATION OF MICHAEL STANLEY REGAN

Mr. BARR. Madam President, I rise today to support the nomination of Michael Regan to be the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency. One look at Michael's resume should make it clear to my colleagues that he is immensely qualified for this position, not only in qualifications but in his demeanor.

Michael is a proud North Carolinian who, over the last 4 years, has ably served as secretary of the North Carolina department of environment. You will consistently hear from those who have worked with him in this role that whether they agreed or disagreed on a given policy, he always listened and looked to find agreement.

This type of praise is not easy to come by on environmental matters, but it is exactly what we should ask of any nominee to ensure everyone gets a fair hearing at their Agency. That is exactly why North Carolina's agricultural community supports his nomination.

It is our job to ascertain whether a nominee has the knowledge and experience to do the job that the President

has nominated them for, but, too often, we overlook whether a nominee has the right character to lead an organization. In this case, there is no question that Michael Regan has that character.

I have had the pleasure to get to know him over the last several years and to see firsthand his sincerity and love for his family. I know when a man of this caliber is confirmed, he will bring those same qualities to the Agency he leads, bolstering the EPA and ensuring that communities reliant on agriculture for their livelihood will be listened to.

In closing, Michael Regan is a good man. He is the right man to lead the Environmental Protection Agency. And I would urge you and urge my colleagues to confirm him to be the next Administrator of the EPA.

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

FOR THE PEOPLE ACT

Mr. MORAN. Madam President, I am here this afternoon to speak in opposition to H.R. 1, the so-called For the People Act. Every American—no American should be fooled by the wholesome title of H.R. 1. H.R. 1 is an affront to the U.S. Constitution, and the drastic impact this legislation would have on federalizing elections, restricting free speech, and accelerating the divide in this country—that divide between left and right, rural and urban, red States and blue States—would be terribly damaging to our Nation.

We often hear that elections have consequences. In November, Americans voted for a Congress that is nearly a 50-50 split between the parties in the House and precisely a 50-50 split in the Senate. If elections have consequences, then the consequence American voters may have had in mind was to encourage Congress to put aside partisan differences and to work together to do its job on their behalf.

Americans did not vote to give one party free rein to implement an unprecedented power grab, to nationalize elections, and to strip power from States and localities from now into perpetuity, forever.

I am a conservative, and I believe in the primacy of individual liberties and in a Federal Government that exercises restraint. I believe that State and local units of government are inherently more responsive to the wishes of our citizens. Article I, section 4 of the Constitution states that "Time, Places and Manner" of congressional elections "shall be prescribed [by the States]." My adherence to the Constitution thus instructs deference to State governments to oversee their own elections, as they always have and always should.

There are so many problematic and, frankly, unconstitutional aspects of

this legislation, particularly as it pertains to the micromanagement of local elections by the Federal Government.

With regard to the bill's intent to Federalize State elections, I draw your attention to page 44, section 1004. Democrats, in sponsoring and pursuing passage of this legislation, seek to eliminate voter identification laws. Voter identification laws have a lot of merit. It is required that you be a U.S. citizen to cast a vote in the United States. American people generally have common sense, and the Gallup poll indicates that 80 percent of Americans support voter ID laws. When you explain to Americans what voter ID really is, they do support it. Yet, under this legislation, voters showing up to the polls without an ID could simply sign a statement claiming they are who they say they are. If you want to dispel the notion that voter fraud occurs in our elections, this is not the place, this is not the way to accomplish that. I don't want our laws to discourage people from voting, but I want people to be legal who do vote.

On page 166, this bill requires that ballots be counted outside a voter's precinct, removing a local government's ability to verify voter rolls. That authority would instead go to a bureaucrat in Washington.

The requirement to allow third parties, including those politically affiliated, to pick up and deliver absentee ballots, known as ballot harvesting, further erodes confidence in elections. Such a requirement is directly at odds with recommendations from a 2005 bipartisan Commission on Federal Election Reform led by former President Jimmy Carter, which recommended that States prohibit this practice due to an increased likelihood of fraud.

H.R. 1 doesn't even keep the bipartisan nature of the Federal Election Commission in place. It alters its structure deliberately to make it work on behalf of the party in power.

One last point on local elections. This bill allows for in-person voting 15 days before an election. This is the typical, the classic unfunded mandate. I talked to local election officials about this provision specifically, and it would kill their budgets, maintaining rent and staff for weeks on end in rural counties across Kansas where, realistically, you might get fewer than a handful of people to show up on a day that far before the election. There are plenty of other ways to vote in advance when necessary. This would create real-world consequences, real consequences in rural America and in rural Kansas. A one-size solution from Washington, DC, does not solve all problems and, in fact, in many instances creates more problems.

While this provision alone probably wouldn't have contributed to voter fraud, this bill does so by prohibiting officials from reviewing voter eligibility or barring local officials from removing ineligible voters from the voter rolls.

It is imperative that we restore America's faith in our elections, and that is why I am a supporter of S. 13, legislation led by our own Senator, TIM SCOTT of South Carolina, to establish a bipartisan advisory committee to make recommendations that will improve the security, integrity, and administration of Federal elections. This is a measured approach that will help us regain the trust of American voters.

H.R. 1 goes as far to the other end of the spectrum as is imaginable. It drastically changes the rules of our election, implementing every leftwing policy idea pertaining to Federal elections—ideas that are evidently so good, they must be made mandatory. If they were good, they might find their way into existence across the country because they are good, not because the Federal Government requires them.

This legislation would sow immense doubts among voters about the integrity and administration of our elections—something we further do not need. It would corrode our entire system of elections, and for what purpose? Because, simply put, I think Democrats believe passing H.R. 1 would render rural voters, red State voters, impotent and therefore help them win elections.

At a time when our country is so divided, when we should be working together, for example, to end the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, to get America vaccinated, and get our economy back on track, this is a very damaging policy to our Republic, and it is contained within the 800 pages of H.R. 1.

I hope my colleagues on both sides of the aisle take time to read and understand this bill and see and determine for themselves what it truly is. I am interested in making sure that all people have the opportunity to vote. All people who are legally eligible to vote, I want them to vote. But we ought to not skew our elections to see that those we want to vote are the only ones who are eligible to do so and that those who are not eligible to vote are able to do so.

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. 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.

NOMINATIONS OF VANITA GUPTA AND LISA MONACO

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, yesterday, the Senate Judiciary Committee heard from the nominees for the No. 2 and No. 3 jobs at the Department of Justice.

As you know, earlier today, we confirmed the next Attorney General of the United States, Judge Merrick Garland. I supported Judge Garland's nomination because I think he is a quali-

fied, mainstream nominee with the right experience and the right temperament to lead the Department of Justice. I believe being Attorney General is probably the hardest job in the Cabinet because you have two masters. One is the rule of law, as the chief law enforcement officer for the country; the other is, you are a member of the President's Cabinet and serve at his or her pleasure, obviously, a political appointment.

Judge Garland told me, and I take him at his word, that he would work hard to keep politics out of the work of the Justice Department—a goal that folks on both sides of the aisle should support, especially after the struggles of previous administrations.

As I said, I was proud to support Judge Garland's nomination, and now we begin the process of considering other senior positions at the Department of Justice.

One of the nominees who came before the Judiciary Committee yesterday was Lisa Monaco, who has been nominated to serve as the Deputy Attorney General.

Ms. Monaco is a lifelong public servant who previously spent 15 years at the Department of Justice. She is a highly respected Federal prosecutor and national security expert. She advised President Obama and a number of other top government officials on matters like homeland security, cyber security, and counterterrorism, and her expertise extends beyond the ins and outs of matters of policy. Her knowledge of the Department of Justice as an organization will be invaluable to the Department, whose more than 100,000 employees are responsible for carrying out a diverse set of missions. It is a huge organization with a lot of moving parts.

Like Judge Garland, Ms. Monaco affirmed to me that she does not intend to inject politics or to even give it a hearing within the Department of Justice and her duties as the Deputy Attorney General.

I asked her, for example, if she would allow Mr. Durham, who has been appointed as special counsel, to investigate the Crossfire Hurricane issue from the last administration and the tail end of the Obama administration. She said she saw no reason not to give Mr. Durham a chance to complete his work. That is the same position we took on Robert Mueller, who was appointed as special counsel to investigate President Trump. Again, I take her at her word that she will not do anything to fire Mr. Durham or deprive him of the ability to complete his important work.

Ms. Monaco discussed her experience at the Department over the course of the Clinton, Bush, and Obama administrations. She really does have a lot of important, relevant experience. She talked about the unique role of the Justice Department, which, as I suggested a moment ago, functions both as an executive agency that is charged