

clearly Democrats don't want to let border security get in the way of funding for the Green New Deal priorities or supersizing the IRS.

It may have an appealing name, but, as the substance of the bill demonstrates, the so called Inflation Reduction Act is nothing more than the latest installment of Democrats' big government and big spending agenda. It will do nothing to address the real economic challenges facing Americans, and it will do nothing to address Americans' priorities. What it will do is spend hundreds of billions of taxpayer dollars on Democrats' socialist and big government fantasies and raise taxes to help pay for it. Meanwhile, our inflation crisis and our border crisis and rising crime will continue.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Vermont.

#### CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I rise this morning to express my strong opposition to the so-called side deal that the fossil fuel industry is pushing to make it easier for them to pollute the environment and destroy our planet.

But, before I do, let me put my opposition to this disastrous side deal into a broader context.

As the father of four kids and the grandfather of seven, I very much wish that I did not have to say what I am going to say, but the most serious challenge facing our country and the entire world, far and away, is, in fact, the existential threat of climate change. That is not the opinion of BERNIE SANDERS, who failed physics in college. That is what the scientific community is telling us in a virtually unanimous voice.

The latest report from the United Nation's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the IPCC, is very clear, and it is very foreboding. If the United States, China, Russia, and the rest of the world do not act extremely aggressively in cutting carbon emissions, our planet will face enormous and irreversible damage. In fact, the world that we will be leaving to our kids and to future generations will become increasingly unhealthy and uninhabitable. That is not BERNIE SANDERS. That is the virtually unanimous conclusion of the scientists who study this issue.

The truth is that we don't need the scientists or another study to tell us what is happening. We see it with our own eyes here in the United States and all over the world. The American people, today, and people throughout the globe are seeing the devastating impact climate change is having on their communities and their families—with their own eyes. That is what they are seeing right now as I speak.

Please understand—and this may be the most important point I want to make this morning—that, with everything being equal, what is happening right now will become worse and worse and worse. This is not, “Oh, boy, we

have torrential rain,” or, “Oh, boy, ain't it hot?” With everything being equal, everything we are seeing today will become worse in the years to come. Let's just take a brief look at what is happening right now in the United States and around the world.

The past 8 years have been the hottest years in recorded history. Right now, the western half of the United States is experiencing its worst drought in over 1,200 years. Right now, in California, Nevada, and Utah, they are experiencing recordbreaking heat waves.

Historic rainfall and devastating floods took place over a 5-week stretch this summer in eastern Kentucky; eastern Illinois; St. Louis, MO; Death Valley, CA; and Dallas, TX. These are supposed to be once-in-1,000-years torrential rainfalls, and we are seeing them coming all together within a few weeks.

Right now, Europe is experiencing its worst drought in over 500 years. And let's remember that when we talk about drought, it is not only, “Boy, isn't it hot?” it impacts agricultural production and the quantity and quality of food that we eat.

A massive heat wave in Spain and Portugal killed more than 2,000 people in July. Historically hot weather in London and China literally melted bridges, airplane runways, and rooftops. Let me repeat that. The extremely hot weather in London and in China this summer literally melted bridges, rooftops, and airplane runways, with all of the consequences that that has.

Recordbreaking forest fires in Europe have already burned 1.6 million acres of land—56 percent more than the previous record set in 2017. That is a size that is over eight times bigger than New York City.

Recordbreaking drought in China has caused parts of the Yangtze River to completely dry up. The Yangtze River is the third largest river in the world. It is the source of drinking water for 400 million people.

Catastrophic rainfall and massive floods have been going on for weeks in Pakistan, killing at least 1,200 people and displacing another 10 million as one-third of Pakistan is now underwater.

If all of this is not sobering enough and if it is not frightening enough, a glacier in Antarctica that the scientists have dubbed the “doomsday glacier” has been in “rapid retreat” and is melting much faster than previous predictions. Without this glacier and its supporting ice shelves, sea levels could rise by 3 to 10 feet, which could cause entire coastal communities to flood and go underwater forever. We are talking about major cities here in the United States and across the world that could be underwater in the coming decades.

Just think for a moment about the massive dislocation, turmoil, and international tensions that will occur

when millions and millions of people migrate from where they have lived into new areas. The tragedies and disturbances and destruction goes on and on and on.

In the past, a series of climate disasters like these might have seemed like a silly plot in a bad movie about the apocalypse. Unfortunately, however, what we are living through now is not a movie. It is reality. This is what we are experiencing right now in front of us. Again, this entire scenario—what we are seeing now—will almost definitely become worse in the years to come if the United States, China, and the rest of the world do not get our act together and break our dependency on fossil fuels.

One of the strange ironies about this moment is that, if the United States did all of the right things tomorrow, it would not be enough. We need the cooperation of China and of countries throughout the world. We as a planet are in this together, and we are going to have to act decisively. In my view, the largest economy in the world, which is the United States of America, must lead this effort. If we retreat, it sends a terrible message to countries all over the world. If we retreat, clearly, what we will be seeing are more floods, more rising sea levels, more extreme weather disturbances, more ocean acidification, more drought, more famine, more disease, and more human suffering.

Today, to all of my colleagues here in the Senate who have kids and grandchildren—I think that is almost everybody—I just ask you to think ahead 10, 15, 20 years. Think about the discussions you will be having with your kids or your grandchildren when that young person looks you in the eye and says: Dad, Grandma, what did you do to save the planet?

I want you to think about that.

We all know that climate change is real. We know that climate change is caused by carbon emissions. No one disagrees with that. We know that climate change is already causing devastating destruction throughout the world. We know that, if we don't rapidly transform our energy system away from fossil fuels and toward energy efficiency and renewable energy, the situation will only become much worse, and our planet will face irreparable and irreversible harm. That is the simple reality.

Yet, given all that we know and given all that the scientists are telling us, what is the U.S. Congress about to do? Well, the U.S. Congress is seriously considering legislation to provide a huge giveaway to the fossil fuel industry to drill, produce, and sell more oil and gas.

Really? At a time when climate change is threatening the very existence of our planet, why would anybody be talking about substantially increasing carbon emissions and expanding fossil fuel production in the United States? What kind of message does this

send to the people of our own country, to the young people, and to suffering people all over the world? It is that, in the midst of this horrific crisis caused by fossil fuel emissions, we are about to pass legislation to increase fossil fuel production.

Like every other Member of the Senate, I have a pretty good understanding of how politics works in our corrupt political system. Like every other Senator, I understand what campaign contributions are about. I understand what the thousands of lobbyists all over Capitol Hill do, and I surely understand the extraordinary power of the fossil fuel industry to push the legislation that they want. In fact, they were successful for decades in lying to the American people about the reality of climate change. So I know about the power of the fossil fuel industry.

But, today, I beg of my colleagues that, at this moment, when the future of the world is literally at stake, that we have the courage to stand up to the fossil fuel industry and to tell them and the politicians whom they sponsor that the future of the planet is more important than their short-term profits.

In the coming weeks and months, the Senate has a fundamental choice to make. We can listen to the fossil fuel industry and the politicians they pay, who are spending huge amounts of money on lobbying and campaign contributions to pass this dirty side deal, or we can listen to the scientists and the environmental community that are telling us loudly and clearly to reject this side deal and eliminate the \$15 billion in tax breaks and subsidies Congress is already providing to big oil and gas companies each and every year.

While the legislative text of the side deal has not been made public, according to a one-page summary that was released last month, this bill would make it easier for the fossil fuel industry to receive permits to complete some of the dirtiest and most polluting oil and gas projects in America.

Specifically, this deal would approve the \$6.6 billion Mountain Valley Pipeline—a 303-mile fracked gas pipeline spanning from West Virginia to Virginia and potentially on to North Carolina. We are talking about a pipeline that would generate emissions equivalent to 37 coal plants or over 27 million cars each and every year.

It is hard for me to understand why anyone—anyone who is concerned about climate change—would consider for one second voting to approve a pipeline that would be equivalent to putting 27 million more cars on the road each and every year, especially at a time when we are trying to transition into electric vehicles.

On August 24, over 650 environmental and civil rights organizations wrote a letter to Majority Leader SCHUMER and Speaker PELOSI urging them to reject this side deal. This letter was signed by the Sierra Club, the Sunrise Movement, Friends of the Earth, Physicians

for Social Responsibility, 350.org, Greenpeace, Public Citizen, People's Action, and the NAACP.

Here is a summary of what the letter says. This is a letter signed by 650 environmental and civil rights groups:

On behalf of 653 frontline communities and environmental . . . organizations representing millions of members and supporters nationwide, we are writing to express our strenuous opposition to any additional fossil fuel giveaways. Alarming proposals have been referenced by Senator MANCHIN, in a short memo, and in legislative language that was clearly drafted in consultation with the American Petroleum Institute. . . . It has been reported that Manchin has demanded these handouts to the fossil fuel industry as a further price for his vote on the Inflation Reduction Act, which already included large giveaways to polluters.

We call on you to unequivocally reject any effort to promote fossil fuels, advance unproven technologies, and weaken our core environmental laws. . . . This fossil fuel wish list is a cruel and direct attack on environmental justice communities and the climate. This legislation would truncate and hollow-out the environmental review process, weaken Tribal consultations, and make it far harder for frontline communities to have their voices heard by gutting bedrock protections in the National Environmental Policy Act and Clean Water Act. . . . Supporting this legislation would represent a profound betrayal of frontline communities and constituents across the country would have called on you to . . . advance a just, renewable energy future.

That is from 650 environmental organizations. I could not agree more.

The entire letter can be found online at <https://peoplevsfossilfuels.org/dirty-deal-letter/>.

I should also add that at least 59 of our colleagues in the House of Representatives will soon be releasing a letter expressing strong opposition to this side deal. Let me briefly quote from that letter:

According to media reports, there is agreement to advance a series of anti-environmental and anti-environmental justice provisions through the House, at the behest of the American Petroleum Institute. . . . These destructive provisions will allow polluting manufacturing and energy development projects to be rushed through before the families who are forced to live near them are even aware of the plans. . . . We remain deeply concerned that these serious and detrimental permitting provisions will significantly and disproportionately impact low-income communities, indigenous communities, and communities of color. The inclusion of these provisions in a continuing resolution, or any other must-pass legislation, would silence the voices of frontline and environmental justice communities by insulating them from scrutiny. Such a move would force Members to choose between protecting environmental justice communities from further pollution or funding the government.

We urge you to ensure that these provisions are kept out of a continuing resolution or any other must-pass legislation this year.

That is a letter that comes from over 50 of our colleagues in the House of Representatives.

I ask unanimous consent to have that letter printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

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

Cosigners (59): Rep. Grijalva, Rep. Khanna, Rep. Ocasio-Cortez, Rep. Schakowsky, Rep. Stansbury, Rep. Huffman, Rep. McEachin, Rep. Takano, Rep. Bowman, Rep. Bush, Rep. Doggett, Rep. Velázquez, Rep. Españillat, Rep. Norton, Rep. Tlaib, Rep. Scott, Rep. Gwen Moore, Rep. Case, Rep. Raskin, Rep. Andy Levin, Rep. Carolyn Maloney, Rep. Lowenthal, Rep. DeSaulnier, Rep. Bass, Rep. Watson Coleman, Rep. Nadler, Rep. McNerney, Rep. Clarke, Rep. S. Brown, Rep. McCollum, Rep. Waters, Rep. H. Johnson, Rep. Barbara Lee, Rep. Neguse, Rep. Carson, Rep. Omar, Rep. Evans, Rep. Meng, Rep. Pressley, Rep. Barragán, Rep. Chuy García, Rep. Jayapal, Rep. Danny K. Davis, Rep. Federica Wilson, Rep. Dean, Rep. Adams, Rep. Porter, Rep. Clarke, Rep. Blumenauer, Rep. Roybal-Allard, Rep. Napolitano, Rep. Gerald E. Connolly, Rep. Cárdenas, Rep. Crow, Rep. Cohen, Rep. Cicilline

DEAR SPEAKER PELOSI AND LEADER HOYER: The permitting and public notice and comment provisions mandated by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) are among the only tools local communities have to force careful review of federal projects that may have serious, long-term, environmental, and public health consequences in those communities. Congress should continue to provide increased funding to assist federal agencies in completing the NEPA process but attempts to short-circuit or undermine the law in the name of "reform" must be opposed.

According to media reports, there is agreement to advance a series of anti-environmental and anti-environmental justice provisions through the House, at the behest of the American Petroleum Institute (API). These destructive provisions will allow polluting manufacturing and energy development projects to be rushed through before the families who are forced to live near them are even aware of the plans.

The proposed legislation would restrict public access to the courts to seek remedies against illegal project development; place arbitrary limits on the amount of time the public is given to comment on polluting projects; and curtail public input, environmental review, and government accountability. Additionally, the API plan would require a certain number of harmful fossil fuel projects to be designated as "projects of strategic national importance" to receive priority federal support, assistance, and expedited environmental review. These permitting "reforms" would weaken other important public health protections, including the Clean Water Act and more.

We remain deeply concerned that these serious and detrimental permitting provisions will significantly and disproportionately impact low-income communities, indigenous communities, and communities of color. The inclusion of these provisions in a continuing resolution, or any other must-pass legislation, would silence the voices of frontline and environmental justice communities by insulating them from scrutiny. Such a move would force Members to choose between protecting EJ communities from further pollution or funding the government.

We urge you to ensure that these provisions are kept out of a continuing resolution or any other must-pass legislation this year.

Mr. SANDERS. So there we are. We have got 650 environmental and social justice organizations, representing millions of people, and we have got the entire scientific community saying we have got to cut carbon emissions. And then on the other side, we have the fossil fuel industry and all of their campaign contributions. So that is what it is.

Today, I ask my colleagues to stand up for our kids, for our grandchildren, and for future generations. We have got to have the courage to finally tell the fossil fuel industry that the future of this planet is more important than their short-term profits.

I yield the floor.

#### NOMINATION OF ANDRE MATHIS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, today, the Senate will vote to confirm Andre Mathis to serve on the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals. Mr. Mathis is an outstanding nominee with extensive litigation experience and deep ties to the Tennessee legal community.

Over the years, he has litigated hundreds of civil cases and has defended approximately 150 criminal cases as a member of the Criminal Justice Act panel in the Western District of Tennessee. Mr. Mathis has tried 19 cases to verdict or final judgment and has briefed 23 appeals. And if confirmed, he would be the first Black man to sit on the Sixth Circuit from Tennessee. Mr. Mathis was rated unanimously "well qualified" by the American Bar Association, and he received a bipartisan vote in committee. Despite his extensive experience, some on the other side have questioned Mr. Mathis' credentials, as well as his confirmation process itself.

Let's set the record straight. Mr. Mathis is highly qualified for this job. And any claim that there was no meaningful consultation between the White House and the Tennessee Senators on this vacancy is simply false. Over a period of 6 months, the White House asked the Tennessee Senators for proposed candidates, interviewed one such candidate, and made Mr. Mathis available to the Senators to conduct their own interviews. There is a clear record of good faith consultation regarding this vacancy, consultation that far exceeded that afforded by the Trump White House to several Democratic Senators.

Remember, under the former President, Senate Republicans regularly supported circuit nominees who were nominated, even though the Trump White House did not seek any input from home-State Democratic Senators. I have said it many times: There cannot be one standard for Republicans and another for Democrats.

With Mr. Mathis' nomination, this Senate has an historic opportunity to confirm a lifelong Tennessean and a person of outstanding credentials and integrity to serve the community that raised him. I look forward to supporting him and urge my colleagues to do the same.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the 11:30 a.m. vote start now.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### VOTE ON MATHIS NOMINATION

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Mathis nomination?

Mr. PETERS. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. OSSOFF), and the Senator from Nevada (Ms. ROSEN) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) and the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI).

The result was announced—yeas 48, nays 47, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 329 Ex.]

#### YEAS—48

Baldwin	Heinrich	Peters
Bennet	Hickenlooper	Reed
Blumenthal	Hirono	Sanders
Booker	Kaine	Schatz
Brown	Kelly	Schumer
Cantwell	Kennedy	Shaheen
Cardin	King	Sinema
Carper	Klobuchar	Smith
Casey	Leahy	Stabenow
Coons	Lujan	Tester
Cortez Masto	Manchin	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Markley	Warner
Durbin	Merkley	Warnock
Feinstein	Murphy	Warren
Gillibrand	Murray	Whitehouse
Hassan	Padilla	Wyden

#### NAYS—47

Barrasso	Graham	Risch
Blackburn	Grassley	Romney
Blunt	Hagerty	Rounds
Boozman	Hawley	Rubio
Braun	Hoeven	Sasse
Capito	Hyde-Smith	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Inhofe	Scott (SC)
Collins	Johnson	Shelby
Cornyn	Lankford	Sullivan
Cotton	Lee	Thune
Cramer	Lummis	Tillis
Crapo	Marshall	Toomey
Cruz	McConnell	Tuberville
Daines	Moran	Wicker
Ernst	Paul	Young
Fischer	Portman	

#### NOT VOTING—5

Burr	Murkowski	Rosen
Menendez	Ossoff	

The nomination was confirmed.

(Mr. BOOKER assumed the Chair.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCHATZ). Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the following nomination which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Salvador Mendoza, Jr., of Washington, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Ninth Circuit.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TESTER). The senior Senator from Texas.

#### SOCIALISM

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I am a firm believer in the American dream. People come to this country, perhaps as legal immigrants, start with little, invest themselves in a lot of hard work because they don't have anything else to invest, provide for their families, maybe even eventually start a small business of their own, create jobs and a means to earn a livelihood for their employees. That is what I think most people think of when they think about the American dream.

And it is built on an economic system known as capitalism, as distinguished from socialism. And capitalism has lifted more people out of poverty than any other economic system known to humankind.

There are those who have a different point of view. They call themselves democratic socialists.

I actually have here before me the Democratic Socialists of America web page that asks the question: "What is democratic socialism?"

They start first with the criticism of capitalism. They say:

Capitalism is a system designed by the owning class to exploit the rest of us for their own profit.

That is an incredibly cynical and, I think, misguided view, but that is their opinion.

And they go on to say:

We must replace it with democratic socialism.

And there are a number of Members of Congress, notably the junior Senator from Vermont here who is an advocate for democratic socialism. I have read where he gave a speech explaining why he thinks that is a better way to go.

And then there are a number of Members of the House known colloquially as the Squad, who are members of the Democratic Socialists of America and advocate their particular point of view.

Even though Joe Biden was elected President of the United States in 2020, he essentially has embraced the democratic socialist agenda—the Green New Deal, Medicare for All, free college, free childcare, free everything.

Well, to no one's surprise, once people called it what it was and what it is, it didn't make it very far. The American people experienced a severe sticker shock when they heard the cost of these proposals.

One estimate pegged the cost of the Green New Deal at a whopping \$93 trillion, an absolutely unfathomable amount of money.

And much to our Democratic colleagues' surprise, families do not want the Federal Government managing every little detail of their lives, from making their childcare arrangements to determining which doctors they can see or, rather, which doctors they can't see.

Our Democratic friends found that socialism wasn't as popular as they hoped, but they weren't ready to give up on the bigger government dreams so they made a few marketing changes.