ice-free seasons have resulted in greater coastal erosion and difficulty accessing some of our subsistence resources; melting permafrost has exacerbated this erosion in addition to creating infrastructure damage that is expensive to repair, ruining our traditional siġ uaqs (ice cellars where meat is stored) through flooding, and is making travel across tundra more difficult. Elsewhere in Alaska, other regions are also struggling with an increase in wildfires, the warming of rivers that leads to stresses in the fish populations that they rely on to subsist, flooding, and the introduction and expansion of invasive plants and insects. Any response mechanisms that the government introduces must be flexible and robust enough to cover the varying changes that we are seeing across our region and the State as a whole.

VOICE's overarching recommendation is that the Department consider—in lieu of new ''top down'' policies that, while well intentioned, don't always serve communities as they are intended—setting up a grant program that allows affected communities the flexibility and empowerment to respond to the impacts that they are facing in a culturally responsible way that fits their local environment and community. Overall, we have not seen very many examples of government responses and assistance to our climate related changes that have been particularly useful. Any action related to a changing climate falls to the NSB, to handle the responses in our communities, including building sea walls to protect against erosion and fixing roads and buildings damaged by permafrost thaw. Through a multi-year effort, the NSB has been working through the process of receiving funding and support from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to build revetment in the community of Utqiaġvik, our largest community, to prevent erosion from consuming many houses, businesses, and local infrastructure. Utqiaġvik is not the only community in our region that is experiencing significant erosion; there are similar needs in Point Hope and Wainwright. Programs and policies that would assist in assessment of climate related changes and address solutions and funding around these impacts are necessary.

In terms of climate change observation and other related programs, we have seen most success in local observer networks, when local people are trained to monitor and measure the changes that they are seeing in their own communities, this creates a sense of empowerment rather than helplessness. Ideally, permanent, local jobs within our communities threatened by climate change would be created by an initiative from the federal government. We believe that support of these local networks should be prioritized over the many studies in our communities that are conducted by multiple federal agencies. Current local network systems need to be expanded to include all communities because they rely heavily on indigenous and traditional knowledge of our environment in a way that no western scientist can compare. VOICE recommends that there are clear definitions developed around climate change terminology, for example, 'climate change resilience' is ambiguous and is geographically variable. The truth is that in the Arctic, and in Alaska in general, we are well beyond the point of mitigation and have firmly moved into the realm of adaptation. From retrofitting existing infrastructure to moving entire communities, adaptation is incredibly expensive. Federal agencies should take a stronger initiative in partnering with our local communities to better understand the impacts of climate change and the viability of available renewable technologies that can be utilized in arctic conditions. All of our communities currently run off of hydrocarbons and we hear from those unfamiliar with our ecosystem that we should begin the switch to run our communities off of renewable resources, but we have yet to see a legitimate solution to our energy needs that is viable in the unique and challenging Arctic conditions.

APPLYING FOR AND ACCESSING TRIBAL DISCRETIONARY GRANTS

One way the process around discretionary grants for tribes that can be improved would be to set up additional offices and positions in regional offices like Tribal grant liaisons to assist tribes and help build a sustainable beneficial relationship. A regional grant liaison dedicated to tribes would also be able to help the department create more targeted communication grant campaigns and they could act as a point of contact for tribes navigating the grants process. Small tribes like those in our region often have a difficult time building relationships with the federal government and understanding the federal regulations around the grants they are applying for. As I mentioned the burdensome reporting process can create challenges with tribes that have low capacity or high turnover, leaving them ineligible for future grants. Federal agencies should take a stronger initiative in partnering with our local communities to better understand them before developing and awarding grants.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on addressing equity in government policies. We hope that this conversation will be ongoing and that our comments will be useful as the United States Government decides how best to address this issue.

Quyanaq,

JOHN HOPSON, JR.,
President.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Here is one. It is from the president of the Voice of the Arctic Iñupiat, John Hopson, Jr.

In terms of equity [racial equity] we understand that the Biden Administration has made promises domestically and internationally to curb this country's emissions and we, as Iñupiat people whose homelands are on the front lines of climate change, can understand the need to move in that direction when it comes to address government policies. What we cannot support, however, is that those efforts are [often] made on the backs of indigenous peoples in Alaska without even a conversation, that is not how more equity is achieved. The federal government must allow us time and resources for a thoughtful, deliberate, and sustainable transition of our economy but instead we have seen secretarial and executive actions [from this administration] that threaten our way of [life and] economic sustainability and therefore our [entire] way of life [in America's Arctic].

Another group: Apparently, consultation with all indigenous groups in the country, except for those in Alaska, is this administration's policy.

So, bottom line, I need commitments from the Fish and Wildlife Service on these issues: the Russian River land exchange, the King Cove land exchange. More broadly, I need the administration to end its war on Alaska and our working families.

I am happy to discuss with the Senator from Montana on these issues and maybe get his help, but for right now, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Mr. TESTER. Madam President, could I just get a minute?

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

Mr. TESTER. Because I know there is a vote coming.

First of all, I would ask my friend from Alaska—I appreciate the fact you are standing up for your constituents to do what is right. I have no problem with that whatsoever. I have no problem with the concerns you brought up on the Russian River and the King Cove Road, although I don't know the issues nearly as well as you do. But my point is this: If you are able to put Ms. WILLIAMS in as Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service, she has a track record of listening to people. You happen to have a ''U.S. Senator'' in front of your name; you will be at the top of the list. She is not somebody who shuts the door and says: Just because you are Republican, I don't want to listen to you. She is somebody who always brings in people, collaborates, and comes to a decision that will work. I wouldn't be up here advocating for her if I didn't believe that.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Well, to my colleague, I look forward to working with you on that and those amendments and look forward to moving her nomination forward in that light.

I yield the floor.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Amy Gutmann, of Pennsylvania, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Federal Republic of Germany.

VOTE ON GUTMANN NOMINATION

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

Mr. DURBIN. 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 senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) and the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. LUJÁN) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO) and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS).

The result was announced—yeas 54, nays 42, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 40 Ex.]

YEAS—54

Baldwin	Booker	Carper
Bennet	Brown	Casey
Blumenthal	Cantwell	Collins
Blunt	Cardin	Coons

Cortez Masto	Leahy	Schatz
Duckworth	Manchin	Schumer
Durbin	Markey	Shaheen
Gillibrand	Menendez	Sinema
Graham	Merkley	Smith
Hassan	Murphy	Stabenow
Heinrich	Murray	Tester
Hickenlooper	Ossoff	Toomey
Hirono	Padilla	Van Hollen
Kaine	Peters	Warner
Kelly	Reed	Warnock
Kennedy	Romney	Warren
King	Rosen	Whitehouse
Klobuchar	Sanders	Wyden

NAYS—42

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

NOT VOTING—4

Barrasso	Luján
Feinstein	Rounds

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Lisa A. Carty, of Maryland, to be Representative of the United States of America on the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, with the rank of Ambassador.

VOTE ON CARTY NOMINATION

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

Mr. HICKENLOOPER. 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 legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. LUJÁN), and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO) and the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS).

The result was announced—yeas 68, nays 27, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 41 Ex.]

YEAS—68

Baldwin	Hassan	Risch
Bennet	Heinrich	Romney
Blumenthal	Hickenlooper	Rosen
Blunt	Hirono	Rubio
Booker	Kaine	Sanders
Brown	Kelly	Sasse
Burr	King	Schatz
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Schumer
Capito	Leahy	Shaheen
Cardin	Manchin	Sinema
Carper	Markey	Smith
Casey	McConnell	Stabenow
Collins	Menendez	Sullivan
Coons	Merkley	Tester
Cornyn	Moran	Thune
Cortez Masto	Murkowski	Tillis
Crapo	Murphy	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Murray	Warner
Durbin	Ossoff	Warnock
Fischer	Padilla	Warren
Gillibrand	Peters	Wyden
Graham	Portman	Young
Grassley	Reed	

NAYS—27

Blackburn	Hagerty	Lummis
Boozman	Hawley	Marshall
Braun	Hoeven	Paul
Cassidy	Hyde-Smith	Scott (FL)
Cotton	Inhofe	Scott (SC)
Cramer	Johnson	Shelby
Cruz	Kennedy	Toomey
Daines	Lankford	Tuberville
Ernst	Lee	Wicker

NOT VOTING—5

Barrasso	Luján	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Rounds	

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MURPHY).

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.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 5 p.m. today, the Senate vote on the confirmation of the Wong nomination.

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

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate resume consideration of the Bush nomination.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. REED. Mr. President, last week, I came to the floor to warn that we are moving closer to a yearlong continuing resolution, or a CR, that would have devastating implications for every Federal Agency—particularly the Department of Defense.

We are 5 months into the fiscal year. Soon, the House will send over another stop-gap measure so we can avoid a shutdown for a few more weeks. When the short-term funding bill expires, the fiscal year will be halfway over. We need to get this work done.

As outlined last week, Democrats put a deal on the table months ago that gave Republicans what they wanted—more funding for defense than the $22 billion increase that President Biden sought and less money for nondefense programs than he requested. This should have been an easy deal for them to accept. Indeed, the defense funding number that Democrats are willing to agree to is the number that Republicans on the Armed Services Committee proposed this summer and that was incorporated into the National Defense Authorization Act. But even with that defense number in hand, our Republican colleagues continue to draw out negotiations, pushing us closer to a full-year continuing resolution that would fund defense at a level that is less than President Biden initially requested and about $37 billion lower than the level set out in the NDAA.

I think that is important. If the Republicans continue to reject a sensible agreement on an Omnibus appropriations bill, they will end up with a defense number that is less than what President Biden sent up, and what he sent up was harshly and vigorously criticized by the Republicans as being not only ineffectual but also somehow undermining our defense.

So it is very clear that we have to move quickly to make a full-year CR an impossibility and that we have to move and vote for an Omnibus appropriations bill. A CR for the full year will shortchange our military. It will disrupt the efficient operations of the Federal Government in the midst of international tension, the ongoing COVID–19 pandemic, and a fragile economic recovery.

Let me focus on the Navy and Marine Corps for a moment. Like the other services, they would be hard hit. A full-year CR would lead to a shortfall of $4.4 billion from the level the President requested.

Even worse, the Navy estimates the impact could total more than $14 billion of misaligned funds because a CR prohibits any new starts and production rate increases. The military personnel accounts alone would be $1.6 billion below what the Navy needs, and that is the pay and benefits for our men and women in uniform. The Navy's Active-Duty end strength would be reduced by 23,000 sailors of its planned accessions. Almost half of the permanent change-of-station moves would be cut, and the Navy Reserves would also face a substantial reduction in its end strength.

A full-year CR could leave the training and readiness accounts for the Navy and Marine Corps about $2.5 billion short of what they need. This shortfall would reduce the services' flight operations by 10 to 20 percent for all units for 6 months. Reductions in ship operations will put training certifications for one carrier strike group and two expeditionary strike groups at risk, thereby impacting fiscal year 2023 deployments.

This shortfall would impact the scheduling of ship maintenance availabilities for five Virginia-class submarines and two aircraft carriers—