

this—with zero carbon emissions, by the way.

The Biden administration is obsessed with wind and solar, but they know deep down that they can't touch nuclear energy. They know that their leftwing voting base hates nuclear energy—hates it.

I think we need to go back to the education department and start learning about nuclear energy. Everybody should be brought up to speed. Instead of being scared of it, we should adopt it. This opposition to nuclear power really has no basis in the facts. It is bad economics, and it is bad environmental policy.

Let's talk about the economics and let's talk about the environmental impact of nuclear energy. First, economics.

Nuclear energy is the most efficient source of energy ever known to man. In fact, nuclear energy is 8,000 times more efficient than fossil fuels—8,000 times. Fossil fuels are a lot more efficient than wind and solar. We know that.

Nuclear energy is cheap to produce. Nuclear is also safe for the environment. I am going to repeat that. Nuclear energy is safe for the environment. My Democratic colleagues are worried about carbon emissions, so why not nuclear energy? But I hardly hear any of them ever championing nuclear energy, which produces zero emissions and removes harmful pollutants from the atmosphere.

Environmentalists claim nuclear energy is dangerous. Environmentalists point to a few headlines from over the last 80 years, but they don't point to the facts. The fact is that our technology is better and better every day. We have different reactors that are unbelievable. They are cheaper to build. They are more efficient. They are almost 100 percent safe. They are salt-based. They have zero possibility of any reactor that melts down or releases any radiation in the atmosphere. But what have we done? We have just disregarded it. We just said: Oh, nuclear energy doesn't work. It is not safe. We are going to get away from it.

We better wake up and smell the roses. Nuclear energy is safer now than it was 40 years ago and certainly 80 years ago. Our scientists have learned. I can understand the thoughts of years and years ago when we had different reactors that actually melted down.

How many people died in Three Mile Island in 1979? I think if you are really interested, you ought to go back and look at this. You ought to go back and look at the things that were brought up by the media that never came to fruition.

So it should be clear: Nuclear energy is a good investment and should be a big target for investment for years to come for the United States.

I am deeply grateful to my State of Alabama's energy workers who are keeping the lights on for our people across our country. Right now as we speak, there are thousands of Alabama

energy workers off the gulf coast exploring for oil and gas. I am also proud that Alabama is America's fifth largest producer of nuclear energy. We have two nuclear plants and five nuclear reactors.

The Tennessee Valley Authority—which is run by the government, by the way—operates Browns Ferry in Athens, AL, which is TVA's largest nuclear plant. The Browns Ferry plant produces one-fifth of the TVA's energy, which covers a lot of the South. It directly supports 1,500 jobs and powers more than 2 million homes. In Wiregrass, AL, which is in the southeast part of the State, Alabama Power runs Plant Farley, which produces about a fifth of Alabama Power's electricity. I am deeply grateful that Alabama's energy workers are keeping the lights on for all of us.

It is clear we need to stop the obsession with wind and solar. We can use that, but we can do a better job of investing in nuclear energy.

We need to fix the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Right now, it takes about 10 years—10 years—to get a nuclear reactor approved in our country. There is no good reason that it should take so long.

We also ought to support advanced small modular reactors, called SMRs. They are safe, they are cheaper, and they are quicker to build. They are small reactors with lower demands for fuel.

By the way, we gave this technology to China back during the Obama administration. They are building them every day in Asia. They have taken our technology and are using it.

They can bring energy costs down and also emissions down.

It is time we got to work on nuclear energy. The polls show the American people are becoming more and more supportive of nuclear power; there is no doubt about that. A clear majority of the American people want and need more nuclear plants. This should be a bipartisan issue. Let's look out for the American people. It is good economics, it is good energy policy, it is good for our environment, and it is long, long overdue.

NOMINATION OF JOHN A. KAZEN

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, today, the Senate will vote to confirm Judge John Kazen to the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Texas.

Born in Lincoln, NE, Judge Kazen received his B.A. from the University of Texas at Austin and his J.D. from the University of Houston Law Center. After completing law school, Judge Kazen began his legal career at Kemp, Smith, Duncan & Hammond, P.C., where he focused on personal injury defense litigation. He then opened his own firm, Kazen, Meurer & Perez LLP, where he advised businesses and organizational clients on personnel matters and business transactions. In 2018, Judge Kazen was appointed to be a magistrate judge for the same district to which he is nominated. In his time

on the bench, he has issued more than 7,500 reports and recommendations, orders, and opinions. The American Bar Association rated Judge Kazen "well qualified" to serve on the district court, and he has the support of Senators CORNYN and CRUZ.

Judge Kazen's deep ties to the southern Texas legal community, combined with his courtroom experience as both a litigator and a judge, make him an excellent candidate to serve on the federal bench.

I thank my colleagues for supporting his nomination.

Mr. TUBERVILLE. I yield the floor.

VOTE ON KAZEN NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, all postcloture time is expired.

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

Mr. SCHATZ. 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. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Washington (Ms. CANTWELL) and the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY).

The result was announced—yeas 83, nays 14, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 2 Ex.]

YEAS—83

Baldwin	Gillibrand	Ossoff
Barrasso	Graham	Padilla
Bennet	Grassley	Peters
Blackburn	Hagerty	Reed
Blumenthal	Hassan	Ricketts
Booker	Heinrich	Risch
Boozman	Hickenlooper	Romney
Brown	Hirono	Rosen
Budd	Hyde-Smith	Rounds
Butler	Johnson	Rubio
Capito	Kaine	Sanders
Cardin	Kelly	Schatz
Carper	Kennedy	Schumer
Casey	King	Shaheen
Collins	Klobuchar	Sinema
Coons	Lankford	Smith
Cornyn	Lee	Stabenow
Cortez Masto	Luján	Tester
Cotton	Lummis	Tillis
Cramer	Manchin	Van Hollen
Crapo	Markey	Warnock
Cruz	McConnell	Warren
Daines	Menendez	Welch
Duckworth	Merkley	Whitehouse
Durbin	Moran	Wicker
Ernst	Murkowski	Wyden
Fetterman	Murphy	Young
Fischer	Murray	

NAYS—14

Braun	Mullin	Sullivan
Britt	Paul	Thune
Hawley	Schmitt	Tuberville
Hoeven	Scott (FL)	Vance
Marshall	Scott (SC)	

NOT VOTING—3

Cantwell	Cassidy	Warner
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The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HICKENLOOPER). 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.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:52 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. LUJAN).

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—(Continued)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the cloture motions with respect to the Rodriguez, Goffman, Crews, and Mehalchick nominations ripen at 4 p.m. and that the Senate now resume consideration of the Rodriguez nomination.

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

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Jose Javier Rodriguez, of Florida, to be an Assistant Secretary of Labor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

HONORING SERGEANT PHILIP DALE NIX

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the service and sacrifice of Greensboro Police Officer Sergeant Philip Dale Nix.

Before the start of the new year, Sergeant Nix was off duty at a local gas station when he witnessed three individuals stealing alcohol. Of course, we know there is really no such thing as being off duty for a brave law enforcement officer who took the oath to protect and serve. So Sergeant Nix's instincts kicked in immediately. He approached the suspects as the crime was taking place, and they responded by shooting him.

Another off-duty officer, a Guilford County paramedic, tried to render him aid. His wounds were fatal, though; and he passed away shortly thereafter at the hospital.

Sergeant Nix embodied the very best of law enforcement. He was a consummate professional, a good and decent person, and was beloved by the community of Greensboro.

It should come as no surprise that Sergeant Nix, like so many other officers, comes from a family with a long legacy of public service. In this case, it included public service at the Greensboro Fire Department, where his father was a captain, his uncle was an assistant chief, and his brother currently serves as a firefighter.

Sergeant Nix worked for the Greensboro Police Department for 22 years and had a distinguished record of serv-

ice. He worked as a criminal investigations division detective; a patrol corporal; a patrol sergeant; a police training officer; a financial crimes detective; and, most recently, as a supervisor of the family victims unit. As one detective of the Greensboro Police Department noted:

Sergeant Nix was the Family Victims Unit. The amount of work, and dedication that he put into his career and into the community to protect vulnerable communities, and protect innocent people [was] unmatched.

For as impressive as Sergeant Nix was for his exemplary work in uniform, it was his job as a family man—a loving husband, a father, and son—that made him the man he was.

As the Greensboro city council member Zack Matheny put it:

[Sergeant Nix] cared about this community . . . and he loved his family 10 times more than he [even] loved this community. So I hope that they can feel his arms wrapped around them.

Sergeant Nix upheld his oath to protect and serve even when he wasn't in uniform. He exemplified what it means to be an exceptional law enforcement officer, and he made the ultimate sacrifice.

My deepest condolences go out to Sergeant Nix's family for their tremendous loss, and my condolences go out to the community of Greensboro, which lost one of their finest and most decent public servants.

We should never—and I will never—forget his service.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Mr. President, as sad as another example of a senseless killing of a law enforcement officer is, I want to take a moment to discuss on this floor Congress's role in supporting law enforcement.

In 2023, 59 officers were killed by criminals, 379 officers were shot in the line of duty, which the National Fraternal Order of Police justly calls a stain on our society.

Unfortunately, this outcome should not be surprising. We have shamefully seen a rise in anti-law enforcement sentiment from fringe voices who espouse radical concepts like abolishing the police. If you go on an ActBlue website today, ladies and gentlemen, and you query "all cops are bastards; give now," you will go to a website where they are encouraging you to make a 13.12-mile run—"1-3-1-2" translates alphabetically to A-C-A-B, which translates to "all cops are bastards." There is a website out there where you can give money and run and support this effort today.

It is sickening to hear this kind of hatred toward law enforcement, not because it is wrong and unfair but because it is flatout dangerous. It has fueled distrust and disdain for our brave men and women in blue. This, in turn, has made their job to protect and serve even harder and more dangerous.

We must do better. We must protect law enforcement. That is the reason I

introduced the Protect and Serve Act last Congress. It makes it a Federal crime to knowingly or attempt to cause bodily injury to a law enforcement officer. I plan to reintroduce this bill this Congress, and I hope to do so with strong bipartisan support.

Congress must also enhance penalties for criminals who intentionally murder law enforcement. That is why I will soon be introducing legislation that would create a criminal penalty for the murder of a local, State, or Federal law enforcement officer, punishable with a death penalty or life imprisonment without parole.

I urge all Americans to call your Senators and Congressmen. Tell them that you want to protect law enforcement officers by enhancing the penalties for criminals who target them.

The men and women in blue are heroes. We have to have their backs. Like Officer Nix, I want every single officer to know I am going to do everything I can to protect them.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, this is a new year, and we are now halfway through the 118th Congress.

For those who are not familiar with the way Congress operates, we call a Congress, really, a 2-year period; and so far, we have completed the first half of that 118th Congress. But the sad news is we have embarrassingly little to show for what Congress has done so far in the 118th Congress.

Under Democratic leadership, we have drifted from one crisis to the next, doing just enough to avoid catastrophe without addressing the biggest problems that our country faces. Those failures are evidenced by the fact that the Senate is set to spend the first 4 months of this year working on the backlog of things we should have done last year.

First is funding the government, keeping the lights on, paying the Border Patrol, paying our military, making sure that government services are available to all citizens.

We are a quarter of the way through the current fiscal year, and Congress has not passed a single funding bill. Not one.

Now we have until January 19—that is our first deadline—to advance 4 of the 12 annual spending bills; otherwise, we will find ourselves in a partial government shutdown or, what is more likely, a continuing resolution of some uncertain duration. It seems inevitable, given the timing.

Then we will only have 2 weeks until the next funding bill deadline arrives on February 2, when the remaining Departments and Agencies will run out of money.

Several weeks later, the third deadline will arrive. The Federal Aviation Administration must be reauthorized by March 8. Failure to do so would result in complete chaos for air travelers.

The next deadline is April 19. That is when the authorities of our intelligence community under the Foreign