

instrumental as the floor officer in making sure the body could carry out the work of the American people day in and day out.

We all owe Officer Gazelle our deepest gratitude for his service to the Capitol Police, to the Congress, and to the Nation. We say to him thank you and wish his family the very best.

Thank you, Mark.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 6 minutes, followed by Senator WHITEHOUSE for up to 6 minutes, prior to the scheduled rollcall vote.

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

NOMINATION OF LEE ZELDIN

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I strongly support Congressman Lee Zeldin as the nominee to be the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency. We are blessed in America with enormous natural resources. I support using our resources responsibly; I support sensible environmental stewardship; and that is what we will have with Mr. Zeldin.

Americans deserve clean water and clean air. They deserve good jobs and economic strength. Environmental protection and economic growth should go hand in hand; they are not mutually exclusive. As the head of the EPA, Lee will return the Agency to its original mission of protecting America's air, water, and land without, as he puts it, suffocating the economy.

Nearly 2 weeks ago, the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works held a hearing on Lee Zeldin, and as the former chairman of the committee, I was honored to introduce him. He is highly qualified, and his support is bipartisan. He is a lifelong public servant, and he is a seasoned lawyer and has a sharp legal mind.

He has over 20 years of military service and currently serve as lieutenant colonel in our U.S. Army Reserve.

Lee also served 8 years in Congress, in the House of Representatives, as a Representative from New York. In that role, he worked to strengthen our economy as well as protect his district's unique ecosystem. He worked across party lines to accomplish his goals.

For the last 4 years, the so-called experts at the Environmental Protection Agency went on a reckless regulatory rampage. They saddled American families and businesses with higher costs and with heavyhanded restrictions. They bowed to climate extremism while ignoring common sense.

In 2024, the EPA introduced one of the most expensive regulations in American history. It is called the electric vehicle mandate. The EV mandate was truly leftwing lunacy at its worst. According to the Competitive Enterprise Institute, the total cost of compliance is over \$760 billion—with a "b." To put this in perspective, the cost of this one regulation coming out of the Biden administration was equal to the

entire pricetag of 8 years of regulations under the Presidency of Barack Obama. The EV mandate would also cost hundreds of thousands of jobs.

Americans rejected the EV mandate and other costly climate policies this past November at the ballot box.

President Trump revoked the EV mandate on his first day in office. Here in the Senate, repealing the Biden EV subsidies is one of my top priorities. These subsidies alone are estimated to cost taxpayers more than \$393 billion.

Americans shouldn't have their taxpayer dollars pay for vehicles that most Americans don't want, can't afford, and actually don't work for them and their families. Americans shouldn't be dependent on communist China like we are today with electric vehicles.

Lee Zeldin will continue President Trump's mission to roll back these punishing political regulations.

The EPA does important work. It does that work in States and in local communities. Lee will be a fantastic partner to my home State of Wyoming. He is not going to impose one-size-fits-all mandates on American consumers and American businesses. Instead, he is going to cut redtape. We will see a new wave of creativity and innovation. Lee knows that innovation, not government intervention, is the best solution to lower prices, to grow the economy, and to protect our environment.

Many Americans are confident that Lee will right the ship and restore the balance needed at the EPA. One of these organizations is the National Association of Clean Water Agencies. In a letter to the committee, the association said that Lee has "shown a willingness to engage with a broad spectrum of stakeholders to address pressing issues."

Lee also impressed our colleagues here in the Senate. That is why my Democrat colleague from Arizona said about Lee:

He's a qualified candidate for this job.

I share America's confidence in Lee.

Through 3 hours of tough questions, Lee Zeldin provided quality answers and proved that he is well qualified. He showed he is committed to strong environmental protection and to energy production. He is the right nominee to lead the EPA. The Senate should confirm him quickly.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I am a friend of the distinguished Senator from Wyoming, but on this matter, we disagree quite a lot. I think, clearly, everybody likes clean air and clean water. My opposition to Lee Zeldin is founded on where he is likely to be on a different issue—climate change.

Climate change is coming at us, and the context for Lee Zeldin's nomination, I believe, is this: We went through a long period of science on climate change, starting with the early days of

Dr. Hansen and NASA's work, work by Exxon and other Big Oil majors themselves, lots of work at universities and in U.S. and State government. And the science pretty well nailed it. They pretty much got it right. They warned what was going to happen, and it began to happen, and it has continued to happen.

Based on those warnings, we moved into phase 2, which was the political era of climate, where it was our job here in this building to listen to those warnings and figure out what the best and smartest thing was to do about them. The problem was that the fossil fuel industry got involved with Citizens United climate money in the hundreds of millions behind it, and they squelched that conversation. As a result, Congress has failed to address the looming climate crisis purely from fossil fuel-funded Republican opposition.

That takes us now into era 3, the era of the "forewarned but not prevented" consequences, and the place in which those consequences are most saliently making themselves felt is in the homeowners insurance industry.

Homeowners insurance is in crisis in this country and is in near meltdown in various States and counties in this country because the risk that the insurers have to bear is now unpredictable to them. So what we are seeing is homeowners insurance prices skyrocketing. We are seeing homeowners insurance companies going bankrupt, leaving States, firing their long-time clients because they don't want to provide coverage in these danger areas, which include coastal areas—Florida, as a result, is kind of first and worst in the home insurance meltdown—and wildfire-adjacent areas second, which puts California and a lot of other Western States very much in harm's way.

Now, the problem with that is it doesn't just end with an insurance crisis. When you get a sufficient number of properties that cannot get affordable home insurance or cannot get home insurance at all, those properties become unmortgageable.

If you are a billionaire living in Palm Beach, you can find another billionaire to buy your property who can write a check, but if you are a real-life person—a plumber in Orlando, living in a development, who paid for their home with a mortgage—you are going to want to sell that home to somebody who can get a mortgage. When your home can't be mortgaged any longer, that will crash its property value. In fact, if your homeowners insurance goes from \$4,000 to \$16,000—a case we heard of—then that crashes your property value, too, because a \$16,000 carrying cost on a piece of property knocks its value way down.

So not from the "greenies," not from the environmental community, but from Freddie Mac, the mortgage giant, we heard the warning that an insurance crash turns into a mortgage crash, turns into a coastal property values crash, which is serious enough

that it redoes 2008: We have another national recession.

It is in that context that we need to understand that we need an EPA Administrator who will take climate change seriously, treat the science honestly, and stand up where necessary to the political pressure that will be coming from the White House, where we have a President who actually thinks it is a hoax, and from the huge fossil fuel forces that propelled him into office with enormous amounts of political money and who now think they own the place.

The fossil fuel industry has done nothing but lie about this and use their power for evil. President Trump is completely mistaken and under the thumb of the fossil fuel industry. And against that will stand the EPA Administrator who has to be truthful and factual and support and defend our environment and our safety from climate change.

In that context, I have nothing against Lee Zeldin personally, but the likelihood of him standing against that fossil fuel bulldozer that is coming at him is, essentially, zero. And that fossil fuel bulldozer is also going to be bulldozing their way into American homes in the form of an insurance crisis that is looming. So this is going to become very real very fast. And in that context, this is very much the wrong guy.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SHEEHY). The majority whip.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call with respect to the Zeldin nomination be waived.

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

CLOTURE MOTION

Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 8, Lee Zeldin, of New York, to be Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

John Thune, Markwayne Mullin, James C. Justice, Tom Cotton, John Barrasso, David McCormick, Steve Daines, Joni Ernst, Roger Marshall, Deb Fischer, Chuck Grassley, Bernie Moreno, Ted Budd, John Kennedy, John Boozman, Tommy Tuberville, Cindy Hyde-Smith.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Lee Zeldin of New York to be Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. OSSOFF) are necessarily absent.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 56, nays 42, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 23 Ex.]

YEAS—56

Banks	Gallego	Moran
Barrasso	Graham	Moreno
Blackburn	Grassley	Mullin
Boozman	Hagerty	Murkowski
Britt	Hawley	Paul
Budd	Hoeven	Ricketts
Capito	Husted	Risch
Cassidy	Hyde-Smith	Rounds
Collins	Johnson	Schmitt
Cornyn	Justice	Scott (FL)
Cotton	Kelly	Scott (SC)
Cramer	Kennedy	Sheehy
Crapo	Lankford	Sullivan
Cruz	Lee	Thune
Curtis	Lummis	Tillis
Daines	Marshall	Tuberville
Ernst	McConnell	Wicker
Fetterman	McCormick	Young
Fischer	Moody	

NAYS—42

Alsobrooks	Hirono	Sanders
Baldwin	Kaine	Schatz
Bennet	Kim	Schiff
Blumenthal	King	Schumer
Blunt Rochester	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Cantwell	Lujan	Slotkin
Cooms	Markey	Smith
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Murphy	Warner
Durbin	Murray	Warnock
Gillibrand	Padilla	Warren
Hassan	Peters	Welch
Heinrich	Reed	Whitehouse
Hickenlooper	Rosen	Wyden

NOT VOTING—2

Booker Ossoff

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On the vote, the yeas are 56, the nays are 42.

The motion is agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

ILLEGITIMATE COURT COUNTERACTION ACT

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, 480. That is the number of days since terror shook the Middle East. It has been 480 days since Hamas's unprovoked attack; 480 days since Hamas brought brutal terror on Israel and the citizens of more than 30 countries; 480 days since American family members and friends were kidnapped.

Last year, the International Criminal Court issued an arrest warrant for Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu and his former defense minister. The illegitimate court—which acts as prosecutor, jury, and judge—brought politically motivated charges for alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Since when did self-defense in the face of terrorist attacks and atrocities become a war crime?

The ICC has forgotten too quickly who started this war, who turned a music festival into a graveyard, who attacked unprovoked, bringing devastating carnage on defenseless victims.

The ICC has forgotten the seven Americans still in Gaza, our fellow country men and women. They have forgotten the remains of the innocent Hamas victims that Hamas keeps—the

hostages even in death. They have forgotten the corpses in the streets, the babies and the soldiers beheaded, the people burned alive in their cars. They have forgotten the doors riddled with bullet holes, the ground stained with blood, the smell of decaying flesh.

The ICC has forgotten the hell Hamas inflicted on Israel and many other nations. And, instead, it vilifies a nation seeking justice and the chance to live in peace. This is not surprising. From the beginning, the United States has rejected this body.

From President Clinton to President Trump, every President—Democratic and Republican—has never recognized the ICC's jurisdiction over our Nation. In fact, no President has even submitted the Rome Statute establishing the ICC to the Senate for advice and consent. We have never ratified it.

And why? Because entrusting an international governing body with authority over U.S. citizens risks undermining the very freedoms and sovereignty that define this Nation.

The ICC has repeatedly sought to impose its authority over the United States and over our allies. And now, it has alleged that Israel has committed war crimes.

Meanwhile, the tribunal conveniently turns a blind eye to atrocities in China, hiding behind the excuse of nonmembership, despite the fact that neither the United States nor Israel are members. The hypocrisy of the ICC is breathtaking.

Well, enough is enough. Earlier this month, the House passed the Illegitimate Court Counteraction Act on a bipartisan basis. I am deeply—deeply—disappointed that my Democratic colleagues who voted against moving forward on this legislation did that here in the U.S. Senate. I sincerely hope that they reconsider. Our sovereignty is non-negotiable. Allowing the ICC to operate unchecked and without consequence grants them authority where they should have none. Worse, it sets a standard that encourages repetition.

We have a responsibility to protect the sovereignty of our Nation and our allies. This moment demands courage, and it demands conviction. And we must rise to meet it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The other Senator from Nebraska.

Mr. RICKETTS. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about the Illegitimate Court Counteraction Act that we voted on earlier in this Chamber.

The International Criminal Court was created to hold accountable war criminals, for example, in countries that did not have a system of justice, did not have the rule of law, and were incapable of holding those people accountable.

In 2020, the International Criminal Court started investigating American soldiers' actions. This, despite the fact that we have a system of justice. We are governed by the rule of law. As my senior Senator from Nebraska just