

Rather than unleashing American energy, the DOE green-lit almost \$23 billion in last-minute loan guarantees, with nearly 70 percent flowing to Granholm's home State of Michigan. Talk about suspicious math.

The Department of Energy is a powerhouse that can help make or break our economy, our national security, and our ability to lead on the world stage. Yet, under the Biden administration, the DOE mismanaged Federal loan programs, rubberstamped regulations that raised consumer prices, and did very little to support the development of critical infrastructure that we need. The former administration's so-called clean energy policies became a subsidy machine for well-connected corporations—companies that pocketed billions while everyday Americans paid more for gas, electricity, appliances, and groceries.

The Biden administration drained the Strategic Petroleum Reserve to its lowest level in decades. This was an unfortunate move. They weaponized environmental regulations to block the development of critical pipelines, making it nearly impossible to transport energy across the country, and they made us more reliant on foreign energy resources, putting American security in the hands of OPEC and other adversarial nations.

That is all about to change. It is all about to change under soon-to-be Secretary Chris Wright.

Chris Wright understands that affordable, abundant energy is imperative to our national security. It is what allows families to heat their homes in the winter without going broke. It is what enables businesses to grow, hire, and compete globally; and it is what keeps America secure, independent, and free from the whims of foreign suppliers.

At his confirmation hearing, Mr. Wright commented on a lot of this and made commitments to rein in waste, fraud, and abuse, especially at the Loan Programs Office, which Granholm used to dole out loan commitments at a pace exponentially faster than what we have seen in years past. This kind of reckless spending didn't lead to breakthroughs in efficiency or cost savings for consumers. No. Instead, it drove up the national debt and lined the pockets of the well-connected.

Chris Wright won't treat the Department of Energy as a slush fund of sorts for political favors. No, his vision is simple: Get the DOE back on track—back to work on prioritizing energy abundance, technological innovation, and exports that strengthen our position on the global stage rather than weaken it.

Mr. Wright also promised to review the DOE's Appliance and Equipment Standards Program, which has become another example of how the previous administration drove up costs, all under the guise of energy savings. As nearly every American can attest, these regulations on common house-

hold appliances like dishwashers, dryers, and stoves—just to name a few—haven't made appliances work better or last longer; they have mostly made things more expensive and work not nearly as well. It is important to remember the extent to which they really have made things more expensive. Chris Wright understands that innovation doesn't come from forcing inferior products on consumers. It comes from creating an environment where better technologies can thrive.

It is telling that even my colleagues across the aisle recognized Mr. Wright's competence by giving him really strong bipartisan support out of committee. Chris Wright deserves that same bipartisan support on the floor today. He deserves it because we all understand that continuing down this path—our current path, the path we have been on for the last 4 years, this path of reckless spending and ideological crusades—is unsustainable. Chris Wright, of course, must do more than reverse the damage. He must rebuild trust with the American people and secure our place as the dominant global energy leader.

We have a new path ahead. Mr. Wright offers us a path where the Department of Energy serves the American people, not special interests; a future where entrepreneurs, not bureaucrats, are the ones who drive innovation; a future where energy abundance lowers costs, grows our economy, and protects our national security. We can continue down the path of inflated prices, foreign dependence, and mismanaged resources, or we can choose a better path. We can make a clean break. We can choose leadership prioritizing the American worker, the American family, the American consumer, and the American future.

The failures of the past don't have to define our future. We find ourselves in the position where we can look at this and chart a course—a course directed at what can be unburdened by what has been.

With Chris Wright leading the way at DOE, we can unleash American energy and ensure prosperity for generations to come. It is time for us to confirm Chris Wright as Secretary of Energy.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

EXECUTIVE SESSION—Motion to Proceed

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 13.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

VOTE ON MOTION

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 legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) and the Senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH).

Further, if present and voting: the senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) would have voted "yea" and the senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. FETTERMAN) is necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 51, nays 46, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 29 Leg.]

YEAS—51

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

NAYS—46

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

NOT VOTING—3

Fetterman	Graham	Hyde-Smith
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The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. RICKETTS). The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Russell Vought, of Virginia, to be Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The 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. 13, Russell Vought, of Virginia, to be Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

John Thune, Roger Marshall, John Barrasso, Lindsey Graham, Tommy Tuberville, Jon Husted, Rick Scott of Florida, Katie Britt, Bernie Moreno, David McCormick, Ted Cruz, Tom Cotton, Markwayne Mullin, Ashley Moody, Mike Lee, Cynthia M. Lummis, Bill Hagerty.

Kaine
Kelly
Kim
Klobuchar
Markey
Merkley
Murphy
Murray
Ossoff

Padilla
Peters
Reed
Rosen
Sanders
Schatz
Schiff
Schumer
Slotkin

Smith
Van Hollen
Warner
Warnock
Warren
Welch
Whitehouse
Wyden

Cornyn
Cotton
Cramer
Crapo
Cruz
Curtis
Daines
Ernst
Fischer
Grassley
Hagerty
Hawley
Hoeven
Husted
Hyde-Smith

Johnson
Justice
Kennedy
Lankford
Lee
Lummis
Marshall
McConnell
McCormick
Moody
Moran
Moreno
Mullin
Murkowski
Paul

Ricketts
Risch
Rounds
Schmitt
Scott (FL)
Scott (SC)
Sheehy
Sullivan
Thune
Tillis
Tuberville
Wicker
Young

NOT VOTING—3

Fetterman Graham Hyde-Smith

The nomination was confirmed. The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider will be considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

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

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

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. 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. 12, Pamela Bondi, of Florida, to be Attorney General.

John Thune, Ashley Moody, Mike Rounds, Cindy Hyde-Smith, Mike Lee, Thom Tillis, Bill Hagerty, Ted Budd, Ron Johnson, Katie Boyd Britt, Deb Fischer, Rick Scott of Florida, Dan Sullivan, John Barrasso, Tom Cotton, Josh Hawley, Eric Schmitt.

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 Pamela Bondi, of Florida, to be Attorney General, 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. BARRASSO. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM).

Further, if present and voting: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. FETTERMAN) is necessarily absent.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 52, nays 46, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 31 Ex.]

YEAS—52

[Rollcall Vote No. 30 Ex.]
YEAS—59

Banks	Grassley	Moran
Barrasso	Hagerty	Moreno
Bennet	Hassan	Mullin
Blackburn	Hawley	Murkowski
Boozman	Heinrich	Paul
Britt	Hickenlooper	Ricketts
Budd	Hoeven	Risch
Capito	Husted	Rounds
Cassidy	Johnson	Schmitt
Collins	Justice	Scott (FL)
Cornyn	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Cotton	King	Shaheen
Cramer	Lankford	Sheehy
Crapo	Lee	Sullivan
Cruz	Lujan	Thune
Curtis	Lummis	Tillis
Daines	Marshall	Tuberville
Ernst	McConnell	Wicker
Fischer	McCormick	Young
Galleo	Moody	

NAYS—38

Alsobrooks	Booker	Duckworth
Baldwin	Cantwell	Durbin
Blumenthal	Coons	Gillibrand
Blunt Rochester	Cortez Masto	Hirono

Banks	Boozman	Capito
Barrasso	Britt	Cassidy
Blackburn	Budd	Collins

NAYS—46

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

NOT VOTING—2

Fetterman Graham

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MORENO). On this vote, the yeas are 52, the nays are 46.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Pamela Bondi, of Florida, to be Attorney General.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. RES. 51

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, as if in legislative session and notwithstanding rule XXII, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 51, which was submitted earlier today; further, that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. RISCH. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, I want to rise today to talk about what Senator COONS is attempting to do here.

I have to say, a lot of us have said for years that the greatest national security threat that Americans face is our skyrocketing national debt.

President Trump agrees with us and is committed to doing something about this. We must confront this, and to do so, hard choices are going to have to be made, and all—all—parts of government will have to be looked at very closely.

The idea of merging USAID and the State Department is not new and has been floated by nearly every administration since the latter part of the last century.