

appropriated and obligated funding for clean energy projects. The result of all of that was clean, renewable energy kept off the grid, increasing the costs that American consumers have to pay.

The trick is that the extra cost paid by consumers was more money in the pockets of fossil fuel polluters—Trump's big donors. That is EPA.

Over at Interior, Secretary Burgum went after the companies trying to build and operate affordable clean energy projects. Early in 2025, Burgum halted construction on two offshore wind projects off the coast of Rhode Island and New York. Later, he ordered a second halt to five offshore wind projects—the two he had already stopped that were back operational and three more projects in Massachusetts, Virginia, and New York.

That stalled nearly 6 gigawatts of clean electricity. If those gigawatts were off the grid, that would mean polluting oil, gas, and coal plants would be picking up the slack. That extra 6 gigawatts of polluting oil, gas, and coal would, in turn, mean billions of dollars to the polluters.

Thankfully, the courts stepped in again against the illegal Trump orders. And the projects continued, but they were stalled.

Now Interior has a new plan: With taxpayer money, pay off companies to walk away from offshore wind leases and, instead, invest the payoff money on fossil fuel projects—again, clean renewable energy off the grid; increased costs for consumers but more profits for polluters—Trump's big donors. Three different companies have made these dirty deals so far. That is Interior.

Over at the Department of Energy, Secretary Wright made it his mission to "revive"—their own word—beautiful, clean coal, even where no one seems to want it. Trump's Energy Department announced that it would provide 625 million taxpayer dollars for retrofits, recommissioning, and life-extension projects for coal plants, including at least one instance where neither the grid operator nor the local utility wanted this intervention.

DOE then announced \$175 million more from taxpayers to extend the life of six coal-fired power plants in Kentucky, North Carolina, and Ohio. The Department of Energy may have illegally repurposed funds Congress had appropriated for carbon capture programs to subsidize those coal plants.

The net result of all of this—increased costs for ratepayers because of the expense of running these polluting plants but more profits in the pockets of fossil fuel polluters—Trump's big donors.

These attacks from polluters, who have infiltrated the government, drive up costs for consumers by billions. The excess costs consumers must pay flows to fossil fuel. You know how the grid works. They run the clean energy first because it is least expensive. If you can back off that low-cost clean energy,

the grid has to climb up the generation stack to more and more expensive fossil fuel plants. And all that added money goes straight to fossil fuel industry pockets—from consumers to the fossil fuel industry, a crooked money pump driving up costs for consumers.

You don't even have to kill the plant. Every day that low-cost clean energy is delayed is another day that money is steered from consumers' pockets into the pockets of the owners and fuel dealers of the expensive, polluting fossil fuel units. Those billions are the polluters' rewards from Trump.

In an America deeply concerned about the cost of stuff, this corrupt extraction of money from consumers to pay off Trump's big donors won't go over well. Cost and corruption are what most concern voters, and this scheme is on the wrong side of both, which brings us to the coming election.

Trump is in desperate political trouble. Costs are exploding, and corruption is epidemic. Voters are angry. So the big polluters need to corrupt the election. A corrupt attack on our elections is the last gasp of the big polluters' and creepy billionaires' grasp on power. They would rather rule corruptly in an oligarchy than live lawfully in a democracy.

Their attack on democracy uses the corrupted Federal Government as its agent. It is an attack coming from inside our own house.

Just recently, the captured Supreme Court delivered yet another vote-suppressing service to billionaire-funded Republicans with its destruction of the Voting Rights Act in *Louisiana v. Callais*.

The Callais case is the culmination of a yearslong "judicial project to destroy the Voting Rights Act," quoting Justice Kagan.

As we all know, in a normal world, judges are supposed to, as Roberts once said "call balls and strikes," not have projects to destroy legislation crafted by Congress.

So Justice Kagan using those words is powerful. Discarding decades of precedent and ignoring mountains of factual findings made by Congress, the Court supercharged Republican partisan gerrymandering across the south. And, boy, did it work.

In just 2 weeks, we have already seen Louisiana, Florida, Alabama, Tennessee, and Mississippi begin redrawing voting maps to disenfranchise minority voters and benefit Republican candidates.

This all comes on top of the Court's other persistent mischief—defending, for instance, billionaires' dark money flooding our elections and defending Republican red map gerrymandering.

Even here, Republicans desperately tried to pass the vote-suppressing so-called SAVE Act, supposedly based on the bogus claim that undocumented immigrants are committing widespread voter fraud. That, as experienced in States that have looked at similar legislation shows, is unequivocally false.

What would have happened is that the bill's excessive restrictions would have disenfranchised millions of legitimate voters, just not the kind that Republicans wanted voting.

As we close in now on the November election, the Trump Federal Agencies are already seizing voter files. At least 48 States have received requests for their complete voter registration lists. The Department of Justice sued 30 of those States and Washington, DC, for their refusal to turn over the voter information.

The administration even faked a criminal investigation to seize records in Fulton County, GA, after the DOJ had failed to obtain those records through civil proceedings. I won't explain that here because I have given a speech on that subject, laying out all of the mischief and shenanigans behind that search warrant.

Even the Director of National Intelligence, Tulsi Gabbard, seized voting machines in Puerto Rico.

The plot here is simple. It is to make sure the corrupt billionaires keep their control of the government so that they can use their control of the government to prop up their pollute-for-free business model and keep gouging you on cost. Well, to keep gouging Americans on cost and to keep polluting for free and to maintain their corrupt influence over the Trump administration, they have got to mess with the election. So be alert.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CURTIS). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. RES. 552

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, here is a simple truth: Climate change is real.

Earlier this year, I came to the floor and asked my colleagues if they could all agree on this simple scientific fact. This being the Temple of Mammon, run by fossil fuel, to no one's surprise, they could not.

So I hoped that if I broke down the reality of climate change into smaller simple truths, we could then find areas of agreement. But 2 weeks ago, when I asked on the floor if we could all agree to the simple truth that sea levels are rising, I was once again met with an objection.

So let's give it another go. Today's simple truth: The oceans are warming. Can we agree on that?

I have come to the floor several times to talk about the fact that the oceans are heating by the zettajoule. So let's talk for a minute about what a zettajoule is.

A joule is the standard unit of energy—heat energy. A zettajoule has 21 zeroes behind it. It is a spectacularly enormous number.

In the past, I have reported that our oceans are measured absorbing around 14 zettajoules of excess heat every year. If you want a comparison, you can image that that is the equivalent of seven Hiroshima atomic bombs detonating in the ocean every second. That is the size of the heat transfer, and, indeed, that is the number in this resolution.

Sadly, since we introduced this resolution, that measure has increased. Our oceans now are warming by 23 zettajoules a year. We are breaking the ocean heat content record for the ninth consecutive year.

To put that in context, the total energy consumption of all humankind on planet Earth is about one-half of a zettajoule per year—all of it, every turbine, every boiler, every engine. All of our energy is one-half of a zettajoule.

That means that, for the fossil fuel component of that one-half of a zettajoule that human beings create, we add 23 zettajoules of excess heat to the oceans. It is a 50-to-1 magnification, nearly, and it is driving ocean temperatures skyward.

Since 1955, the top 2,000 meters of the global ocean have gained approximately 372 zettajoules of heat. And, as you can see, the trajectory is that things are going to get a lot worse.

By 2100, it is projected that the rate of ocean warming will be somewhere between two and six times greater than the rate of warming at the 14-zettajoule level of annual excess heat. A world in which the ocean is warming at six times 14 zettajoules of excess heat every year rapidly becomes an unlivable world for a great many human beings.

This amount of heat has horrific effects on biodiversity and sea life, happening already—happening already. Fisherman know that fish populations are moving across international boundaries or out into the high seas, causing economic uncertainty and harm for fishermen.

Warming sea surface temperatures shrink populations of the world's most abundant phytoplankton, significantly damaging the ocean food webs on which so many humans ultimately depend. Warming and acidification combined prevents species from being able to create their calcium carbonate shells.

I have often spoken on the Senate floor about the humble pteropod—a species that I think nobody cares very much about here, but they are enormously abundant in the oceans. They have been measured as suffering extreme shell damage in the oceans. And they are not a very long trophic hop from things we do care about, like salmon. When you kick the foundation out from under a food chain, it collapses.

Harmful algal blooms grow in warmer water and become more and more severe, taking a toll on fisheries, on public health, on recreation and tourism. If you want a description of what rot-

ting algae on beaches does to tourism, just look at the stories about what Florida has experienced.

Warmer oceans increase evaporation rates, which increases atmospheric humidity, which fuels extreme precipitation and stronger hurricanes. Those stronger, wetter storms and other climate change-induced threats crashing into insurance markets pose a roughly \$25 trillion risk to the global housing market over the next 25 years. When the climate risk gets so severe that it crashes insurance markets, that cascades into mortgage markets, and that cascades into property values. That is where the \$25 trillion estimate comes from. If you want to look more locally, Florida now leads the country in property value loss as the first and worst exposed to this climate risk.

The threats don't end there. The risks that stronger, wetter storms pose to agriculture and food production, insurance, tourism, infrastructure, the energy sector, and more are very, very real. Mature and responsible warnings abound.

As we noted in my last resolution, 30 percent of Americans live in coastal areas. Ten trillion dollars of goods and services are produced in coastal counties across the United States each year. There is a lot in jeopardy due to our warming oceans.

It is the simple truth: Climate change is real. Sea level rise is real. Ocean warming by the zettajoule is real. And all of it is already disrupting American lives, pocketbooks, and families, and it is getting steadily worse.

Mr. President, as if in legislative session and notwithstanding rule XXII, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation be discharged from further consideration and the Senate now proceed to S. Res. 552; further, that the resolution be agreed to, that the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Wisconsin.

Mr. JOHNSON. I am here to object. I will keep it short.

I was down here a couple weeks ago when the Senator from Rhode Island had a similar type of what he called a simple-truth resolution, but it is not that simple.

The purpose of his putting forth this resolution is he wants to do something about it. I am not a climate change denier. I am just not a climate change alarmist. I am not subscribing to Chicken Little scare tactics here.

The problem with trying to do something about climate change is there is nothing we can really do to impact it. We have spent, according to testimony in the Budget Committee when the Senator from Rhode Island was chair, \$5 to \$6 trillion globally. I saw a recent speech given by Secretary of Energy Wright saying that we had spent about \$10 trillion trying to hold back the

tides, trying to address this climate change emergency—which, by the way, two Nobel laureate physicists, Dr. Ivar Giaever and Dr. John Clauser, signed on to a “World Climate Declaration: There is no Climate Emergency.” There isn't.

What we have done, though, is we have taken a \$6 to \$10 trillion cost—the largest malinvestment in human history—and we obviously haven't even dented climate change because we still have the Chicken Littles here claiming a climate change emergency.

So, again, this isn't a simple truth. The simple truth is, yes, climate has always changed. It always will. And I would argue the simple truth is there is not much we can do about it. There is no consensus in terms of the extent that man may impact the climate. We certainly can impact the environment, and we all are—from my standpoint, we are all environmentalists. We want a clean environment. But just think what we could have done with that \$6 to \$10 trillion rather than spending it—wasting it—trying to hold back the tide.

So for those reasons, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I would just note for the record that the University of Wisconsin in the good Senator's home State teaches the science of climate change, teaches courses with names like “Climate and Climate Change,” “Climate Change, Human and Planetary Health,” “Climate Change Ecology,” “Ice and Climate Dynamics,” “Climate Change and Health Disparities,” “Soils and Climate Change,” “Climate Change Medicine,” “Climatic Environments of the Past,” “Agricultural Weather and Climate,” “Climate Action Planning: Sustainable Transportation,” “Case Studies Exploring Infrastructure, Sustainability and Climate Change,” “Climate Change Governance,” “Climate Change, Sustainability, and Education,” and as a lawyer, I would add “Climate Change, Human Rights, and the Environment.”

I would strongly recommend that all of my colleagues who are unfamiliar with what is happening in the real world with climate change go to their home State universities that teach the stuff and listen to what their home State universities have to say.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Ms. LUMMIS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII, the postcloture time with respect to the Warsh nomination be expired and the Senate vote on confirmation of the Warsh nomination at 2 p.m. tomorrow; further, if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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