and argued cases on a wide variety of topics, including constitutional law, bankruptcy, patent, trademark, Federal procedure, antitrust, and copyright issues.

In 1997, the focus of his practice shifted to handling patent appeals before the Federal Circuit. Before the Federal Circuit, he has represented patent holders and patent defendants across a variety of technology areas. He has experience with cases concerning international trade, government contracts, and money claims against the United States, all within the jurisdiction of the Federal Circuit.

Mr. Taranto has argued 19 cases in the Supreme Court; 8 while in the Solicitor General's Office and 11 cases in private practice. He has also presented approximately 20 arguments in the Federal Circuit and appeared on briefs in a few others. He has also argued cases before the First, Third, Fourth, Fifth, Eighth, Ninth, and DC Circuits. The American Bar Association's Standing Committee on the Federal Judiciary gave him a unanimous well qualified rating.

Andrew Patrick Gordon is nominated to be U.S. district judge for the District of Nevada. Mr. Gordon received a B.A. from Claremont McKenna College in 1984, graduating cum laude. In 1987, Gordon graduated from Harvard Law School. Upon graduation, he joined Streich, Lang, Weeks, and Cardon in Phoenix, AZ. In 1992, he moved to Las Vegas, NV, where he assisted Streich Lang to expand into the Las Vegas market through an affiliate of the firm, Dawson and Associates. In 1994, he lateraled to McDonald Carano Wilson LLP, working as an associate until 1997, when he became a partner. He remains with McDonald Carano Wilson to this day.

Mr. Gordon's law experience is mostly in civil litigation in the areas of business, real property, construction, and employment. From 1997 to 2004, his practice centered on litigation arising from commercial construction projects. Over the last 10 years, he has become more active in arbitration and mediation. Additionally, Mr. Gordon has sat on numerous committees of the Nevada State Bar, the U.S. District Court of Nevada, and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. He has tried at least nine cases to final judgment. The American Bar Association's Standing Committee on the Federal Judiciary gave him a rating of substantial majority well qualified—minority qualified.

Mr. LEAHY. I suggest the absence of a quorum and ask unanimous consent that the time be equally divided.

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

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Richard Gary Taranto, of Maryland, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Federal Circuit?

Mr. CARDIN. 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 assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Iowa (Mr. HARKIN), the Senator from Louisiana (Ms. LANDRIEU), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. LAUTENBERG), the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED), and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) are necessarily absent.

I further announce that, if present and voting, the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) would vote ''yea.''

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. VITTER), and the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DONNELLY). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 91, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 33 Ex.]

YEAS—91

Alexander	Feinstein	Mikulski
Ayotte	Fischer	Moran
Baldwin	Franken	Murkowski
Barrasso	Gillibrand	Murphy
Baucus	Graham	Murray
Begich	Grassley	Nelson
Bennet	Hagan	Paul
Blumenthal	Hatch	Portman
Blunt	Heinrich	Pryor
Boozman	Heitkamp	Reid
Boxer	Heller	Risch
Brown	Hirono	Roberts
Burr	Hoeven	Rockefeller
Cantwell	Inhofe	Rubio
Cardin	Isakson	Sanders
Carper	Johanns	Schatz
Casey	Johnson (SD)	Schumer
Chambliss	Johnson (WI)	Scott
Coats	Kaine	Sessions
Coburn	King	Shaheen
Cochran	Kirk	Shelby
Collins	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Coons	Leahy	Tester
Corker	Lee	Thune
Cornyn	Levin	Udall (CO)
Cowan	Manchin	Udall (NM)
Crapo	McCain	Warner
Cruz	McCaskill	Warren
Donnelly	McConnell	Wyden
Durbin	Menendez	
Enzi	Merkley	

NOT VOTING—9

Flake	Lautenberg	Vitter
Harkin	Reed	Whitehouse
Landrieu	Toomey	Wicker

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON NOMINATION OF ANDREW PATRICK GORDON

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Andrew Patrick Gordon, of Nevada, to be United States District Judge for the District of Nevada?

The nomination was confirmed.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume legislative session.

The Senator from California.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each, and I ask unanimous consent that I have up to 20 minutes.

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

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I am very pleased to see that we have confirmed a couple of judges. We have judges all over this country, nominees waiting to be confirmed and judicial emergencies all over the country, so I hope this is a start of a new day. We will see what happens.

Mr. President, I stand here as chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee to talk about one of the greatest threats facing our Nation; that is, climate change, dangerous climate change, or you could call it climate disruption. It seems as though the only people who do not get it are Members of Congress. They do not get it.

Last week I talked about a front page story in USA TODAY that highlighted the impacts of climate change unfolding around us. The story I talked about is the first of a yearlong series called ''Why you should sweat climate change.'' Everyone else is sweating about it but not here, not in this Senate, not in this Congress.

Since last week, additional information concerning climate change has been released that I want to talk about today. I want to build a record in this Senate on an issue that threatens the very lives of our grandchildren. It is hard to imagine that this country is facing a question of our own survival and so few people seem to care about it.

I am going to talk about another report. A study published last week in Science reports that average global temperatures were higher in the past decade than over most of the previous 11,300 years. Let me repeat that. Let me repeat that for any colleagues who might be listening. Average global temperatures were higher in the past decade than over most of the previous 11,300 years. Yet the Senate does very little.

Senator SANDERS and I have a bill—a very important bill—to put a price on the pollution that is causing the climate to be disrupted and to change. Let me say that we do not have a slew of sponsors.

The lead author of the study in this Science report said average global temperatures were higher in the past decade than most of the previous 11,300 years. He is a paleoclimatologist at Oregon State University. Here is what he said:

> What's different is the rate of change. . . . What we've seen over the past 150 years is much greater than anything we saw in the past 11,000.

That is Shaun Marcott, Ph.D., the lead author of the study.

Some people may ask, why is this study important? What does it mean for our kids? What does it mean to our grandkids? Let's go to the quote.

> If the scientists' forecasts are correct, the planet will be warmer in 2100 than it has been for 11,300 years.

The scientific evidence continues to mount. Study after study has concluded that the planet is warming and the impacts have already started. Yet the only place that doesn't seem to get this message is right here in Washington, DC—not at the White House; they get it. President Obama understands it. That is why he worked with us to increase fuel economy, to keep that carbon pollution from automobiles out of the air, and we are moving to a 55-miles-per-gallon standard.

That is going to help, but that is not enough. We need to put a price on pollution so polluters turn away from dirty energy and turn toward clean energy. That will save us from most of the ravages of the changing climate. But the window is closing on the timeframe because impacts have already started. Another study released last week by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, NOAA, found there was a dramatic jump in the amount of carbon dioxide in the air in 2012. It was the second highest increase since 1959, when record-keeping began.

The increase in carbon in the air is yet another signal that scientists' predictions about climate change and climate disruption—those predictions are coming true. We have already seen the devastating and far-reaching consequences of unchecked climate disruption in the extreme weather events.

The Government Accountability Office—the GAO; they are not partisan, and they are not ideological—recently released a report entitled ''2013 High Risk List'' that discusses how climate disruption and extreme weather events threaten our Nation. This is the Government Accountability Office. We, the taxpayers, support the Government Accountability Office. They are nonpartisan, and they are straight-from-the-shoulder analysts. They say:

> Climate change could threaten coastal areas with rising sea levels, alter agricultural productivity, and increase the intensity and frequency of severe weather events such as floods, drought, and hurricanes.''

I guess they look out their window in addition to looking at the numbers. Anyone who looked out their window who lives in the area of Superstorm Sandy understands this.

Climate change could threaten our coastal areas—it is already doing it. I don't know if anybody saw those homes being removed from a beach in Massachusetts—gorgeous homes. They were there for a while—gone, because the ocean was going to envelope them.

According to the GAO, extreme weather events have cost the Nation tens of billions of dollars already, just over the past decade. As these extreme weather events increase, so will the cost to American taxpayers. This is more from the Government Accountability Office. This is not from the EPA. This is not from NOAA. This is not from BARBARA BOXER. This is not from BERNIE SANDERS. This is not from SHELDON WHITEHOUSE. This is not from the Environment Committee. This is from the GAO.

> [T]he impacts and costliness of weather disasters—resulting from floods, drought, and other events such as tropical cyclones—will increase in significance as what are considered ''rare'' events become more common and intense due to climate change.

When I started in this work a very long time ago, we talked about the 100-year flood, and we could protect ourselves against the 100-year flood. Now—as Governor Cuomo has stated so eloquently—we are seeing the 100-year flood every couple of years. Now taxpayers are on the hook due to extreme weather events such as Superstorm Sandy and because the Federal Government owns buildings across the Nation and insures property and crops and provides disaster assistance.

Let's see what else the GAO says:

> Climate change . . . impacts pose significant financial risks for the federal government—

Which, by the way, means us, the taxpayers—

> which owns extensive infrastructure, insures property through federal flood and crop insurance programs, provides technical assistance to state and local governments, and provides emergency aid in response to natural disasters.

So our Federal finances are significantly at risk.

> [T]here is a growing recognition that the cost of inaction could be greater and—given the government's precarious fiscal position—increasingly difficult to manage given expected budget pressures.

We are going to see a couple of different budgets emerge—one from the Democrats in the Senate and one from the Republicans in the House—and they will have different visions for America. One budget, the Democratic budget, is going to get to a deficit reduction, but it will invest in our people. It will say to the very wealthiest: You have to do your share so our kids can go to Head Start, get their education, job training, and clean up the environment.

The other budget is going to be hurtful. It is going to be painful because the other budget—the Republican budget—is going to protect and defend one group of people in this country, which is the wealthy few. Therefore, we will not have the resources to do what we have to do, and we are going to see cutbacks in the areas that we need in order to make sure we plan for this extreme weather and make sure we can avert this climate disruption by investing in clean energy.

The GAO report is clear: Unchecked climate change comes at a very high price, but that is what is happening in this Congress. The President is doing his best. Some of us over here are pushing hard. In the House they passed a bill. We fell short because of a filibuster. We had 54 votes, and we needed 60 votes. As a result, a price on carbon never happened, and now we are seeing hotter days, a hotter climate, and more severe, extreme weather. We need to take these steps. We need to make these investments. As these budgets come down, let's take a look.

I can assure everyone that when we have a travesty and tragedy such as Superstorm Sandy, we are never going to turn away from our people whether it happens to your State, Mr. President, due to a severe drought or certain types of pests that arise because of a change in the weather. We know such events happen. It is happening all over the country, and it can happen anywhere.

There is extreme weather where we have fires and droughts. We have snow when we never expect it, torrents of rain that we cannot even believe is happening, not to mention these high temperatures. We owe it to our children and our grandchildren not to turn away.

Now, let's see what else the GAO tells us. This is a call from them to us. Is anybody listening? Is anybody who gets to vote in this Senate listening?

The GAO calls for ''a government-wide strategic approach with strong leadership and the authority to manage climate change risks that encompasses the entire range of related federal activities and addresses all key elements of strategic planning.''

That is a lot of words for something so simple. What the GAO is saying to us is, you guys better act because this thing is getting out of control. Every time I get a chance on a Monday evening, I intend to come down to the Senate floor and take a few minutes to build a case—and I hope an indisputable one—that we put a price on carbon pollution just like we made sure other pollution had a price on it. It didn't matter if it was a regulatory price or if they had to go buy scrubbers to keep dangerous pollutants out of the air. Carbon pollution is dangerous. It is putting our people at risk, but no one would know it from what is happening around here.

I want to close by thanking my colleague BERNIE SANDERS, with whom I am so proud to serve. I am the chairman of the Environment Committee,

and he is a great member. Together we have come up with an excellent bill. The bill takes the proceeds of that carbon tax and invests it in our people, invests in clean energy, makes sure our middle class and working poor have the funds they need to pay the higher prices of electricity in the early years, and it will create jobs.

There is no question as far as what is happening to our coastal States. There is no question as far as what is happening to our farms. There is no question as to what is happening to our natural resources. There is no question what is happening to our species. Scientists predict that 50 percent of God's species will be gone if we do nothing.

When people stand here and laugh off this notion that we are facing severe climate change, I tell them: Look at some of the church groups who are supporting us. They have come together. They are with us. They understand that God's creation is at stake. There is no doubt about it.

We are the stewards of this environment. We are the ones who are supposed to protect it. Yet in this Senate, it is shrugged off as if it is a nothing burger. There are young people who are here whose future is at stake. They want to enjoy the same opportunities my generation enjoyed. We owe it to them to do better.

This nonpartisan GAO report tells us clearly that we better have a ''government-wide strategic approach with strong leadership.'' I have to say I hope we have more people on this floor who will show that kind of leadership because the clock is ticking.

I say to every Member here—we have old ones, young ones, and middle ones: You are here at the moment that we can do something. You are here at the moment we can still do something. The Bush administration wasted 8 years by going to the courts and arguing that the Clean Air Act did not cover carbon pollution. They did nothing for 8 years. Finally, the Supreme Court ruled 5 to 4 and said: Yes, of course, it covers carbon pollution. God bless the Obama administration for moving forward in every way they can—unfortunately, without us at this point.

We will be judged harshly if we turn away. We are here now. We didn't choose this time to be born. We didn't choose the fact that this is an issue that is upon us. I don't know what is going to wake up this place, but I am going to do my best to ring the bell as often as I can.

I thank the Chair.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. WARREN). The Senator from Alaska.

SECOND ANNIVERSARY OF JAPAN'S TSUNAMI

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, today is the second anniversary of a very tragic event in Japan. An earthquake—a tsunami—claimed nearly 16,000 lives and destroyed community infrastructure, homes, and livelihoods. Years after the fact, our prayers remain with the people of Japan for the lives which were lost and for the devastation that occurred within that country.

I had an opportunity to be in Japan in January. I had a chance to see for myself some of the devastation that Japan still faces 2 years after the 3/11 tsunami and earthquake. The pictures that so many of us recall of the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear reactor. We all watched with great concern as the accident in front of us unfolded. It was truly a sense of helplessness that was brought about by an act of nature. A massive earthquake which delivered a massive wave which truly brought about massive destruction.

I also had an opportunity—after viewing the Fukushima Daiichi reactor—to travel north to a small fishing village by the name of Rikuzentakata. It was a community of about 23,000 people. That community alone lost over 1,900 residents who were swept out to sea—including an Alaskan teacher, Mr. Monty Dickson, whose life was lost. To be in this fishing village 2 years after the fact and see how this community is trying to regain its footing—not only economically but emotionally—was quite compelling. Again, Japan is dealing with the aftermath of this destruction in ways those of us here probably cannot appreciate.

From an energy perspective, the country of Japan—literally overnight—went from a nation where close to 30 percent of their energy was generated by nuclear to a point where the nuclear power that was generated was truly just shut down as everything was on pause for that nation. How a nation rearranges its energy portfolio is a situation that country is dealing with as we speak.

There were connections between Japan and the tsunami that I think are still being felt today. When that tsunami hit, the people of Alaska were on alert on our coastlines. They were waiting and wondering whether we would be impacted by the giant wave that had taken the lives of so many thousands of Japanese. Well, we didn't see the big wave, but what we did see—and what we are continuing to see—is a level of marine debris that has been carried across the currents from Japan and the Pacific Ocean to Hawaii, California, Oregon, Washington State, British Columbia, and then circling all along the coastline of my State of Alaska.

It is estimated that there is about 1.5 million tons of debris that is floating in the ocean. It was estimated by the Japanese Ministry of the Environment that there were 5 million tons of debris that washed into the ocean. They further estimated that 70 percent of that debris sank near the coast of Japan soon after the event. This is something the Japanese fishermen were greatly concerned and worried about.

What we are seeing now—as the floating debris moves its way across the currents—is debris on the shoreline of Alaska in surprising quantities. The picture behind me is some of the debris. There is roof of a house, the bottom of a boat, and buoys. It is just a floating mass of debris in the middle of the Pacific. This is just an example of some of what we have seen over the course of 2 years now.

Sometimes the sightings are pretty phenomenal, such as this picture which was off the Oregon coast. This is actually a concrete dock that floated all the way across the ocean from Japan and landed on the coast of Oregon.

I have sons who are commercial fishermen. They spend their summers out on the water. We worry about obstacles in the water that our fishing vessels could encounter. Running into a concrete dock is not something any mariner would want to do. So we think that 2 years after the fact we should have seen most of the debris we would anticipate. In fact, the vast majority is still coming our way.

These are buoys along the Alaskan shore. This was taken on Montague Island which is just off Kodiak Island. Not all these buoys are necessarily from Japan. Some are just the general marine debris that we see. But what we have been able to determine is that the Japanese buoys are coming across. Those things that are sitting higher up on the water are moving more quickly, but things that are just below the water surface are still on their way.

How do we deal with all this? How do we reach the beaches, whether it is the beaches in Oregon, California, Hawaii or Alaska? In Alaska, we have 44,000 miles of coastline. That is a lot of territory for debris to come up on, and in so much of this area in my State, these beaches are not accessible by vehicle. They are not accessible by road. It is extraordinarily difficult to deal with the cleanup.

This is a picture of marine debris cleanup in a community by the name of Yakutat, a small fishing village along the coast. What they are finding is that as the community volunteers go out and clean what beaches they can, they have no space in their small landfills there to accommodate the debris. So it would be one thing if we knew this was all we were going to be dealing with. Our reality is we know more is coming.

How we respond is going to be key. It is going to be critical to the communities that are impacted. But for so many of these areas where there are no individuals to see this, there are none to appreciate what has happened, but still we are faced with Styrofoam, plastics, nets—incredible amounts of nets—things that will not only foul the beaches but foul the animals that may be in the area. We have a responsibility to act. So how do we do it? How do we do it at a time of difficult budgets? We all appreciate that. It requires a level of creativity, if you will—partnerships with local and government officials. It requires us to be proactive in terms of what is coming to our shores.