

Anyone concerned about our right to life should be concerned about drones having the power to take our life without judicial process.

Anyone concerned about liberty and the rule of law should be deeply concerned about a judicial nominee who embraces courts as a tool of power and the President disregarding the law.

I urge my colleagues to oppose this nomination.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, what is the order?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is in morning business until 12:15 p.m.

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that I be able to speak for as much time as I may consume until that time.

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

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, Senator CRUZ makes an impassioned plea against a nominee who is considered by some to be exemplary. It is his right to do that, but let me say before my friend leaves the floor, as impassioned as he is, calling Mr. Barron a liberal, I have heard many call Mr. Barron a conservative. So he must be doing something right. I think it is interesting. So let's keep politics out of this and look at someone's record.

#### WRRDA

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, with all the arguments and debate that go on around here in a very legitimate way—it is fair. The parties have grown very far apart—whether you look at the minimum wage, with the Democrats wanting to raise it, with some Republicans who say do away with it altogether; with extended unemployment benefits, where we can barely get a handful of them to go along with us—I could go on through the list. We are going to have a chance to make sure students have a fair shot at refinancing their student loans. We do not know where they are, but so far I have not seen them join Senator WARREN in her very important move to allow students to refinance their student loans. I could go through a list longer than I am tall. I am not that tall, but still it is 5 feet of differences.

We finally have come together in a way that I am very proud. As chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee, we have two sides of our committee—the environment side, which tends to be very difficult, very difficult, with big splits; and then we have the public works side. By putting aside our differences—our deep differences—on the environment and focusing on the other side, we have been able to come up with a couple of really good bills.

The first one is the Water Resources Reform and Development Act called WRRDA. It is so important to our Na-

tion, whether you are a coastal port or an inland port, and it is crucial that this get done.

The last WRDA bill was nearly 7 years ago. I was proud to be involved in that at that time. This one—7 years later—is long overdue. I am going to talk to you more about it. We also voted out a highway bill out of our committee. We are very proud of that. Senator VITTER and I worked very closely, and Senator BARRASSO, Senator CARPER, and all the Members on both sides and their wonderful staffs.

So tomorrow, I believe, we are going to vote on WRRDA, we are going to vote on the water bill. I know we have a very hectic day tomorrow, so rather than take the time then, I am going to take the time now, and I am hoping to be joined by some colleagues today. But if not, I will lay out why we need to do this bill.

First, I want to say a wonderful thing happened in the House yesterday when the conference report passed over in the House 412 to 4. That was really pretty terrific. Everyone pretty much rose above partisan politics. I am very pleased that Senator REID is moving forward with this report and all colleagues on both sides want us to pass that conference report and send it to the President. He will sign this bill.

Let me tell you what is at stake: at least half a million jobs—half a million jobs.

First of all, we deal with ports and waterways. The conference agreement makes important investments in reforms related to our Nation's ports. Our Nation's ports and waterways move over 2.3 billion tons of goods—that is amazing—every year; 2.3 billion tons of goods. So we need to keep our ports modernized. We need to invest in our ports. So in this bill we do.

We include a project in Texas, for example, to widen and deepen the Sabine-Neches waterway, which will have over \$115 million in annual benefits. This critical waterway transports over 100,000 tons of goods every year. It is the Nation's top port for movement of commercial military goods. And it is vital to our Nation's energy security.

This bill will allow the Corps to address dangerous cross currents at the Port of Jacksonville, FL—that is another example—that create safety concerns for ships entering and exiting the port. It also allows the deepening of this vital hub of commerce.

The bill also authorizes a project to deepen the Boston Harbor to 50 feet. This will prevent heavier road traffic in the busy Northeastern corridor by allowing larger vessels coming through the newly deepened Panama Canal to transport cargo all the way north to Boston Harbor. Without the access to Boston, these vessels would have to offload in other ports and put the cargo on trucks to their final destinations in the Northeast.

Madam President, what I would like to do now is yield to my friend, the Senator from Louisiana, Ms. LANDRIEU.

I just want to say—and I will finish my remarks when she has completed hers because she has a very hectic schedule and I am able to stay on the floor for a while—whenever I see Senator LANDRIEU she talks to me about her State. And her State is magnificent. I have been there. I was there after Katrina, at her urging. I have been there since to see some of the progress we have made. But Louisiana is a special place. And this special Senator never forgets what needs to be done, and part of it is playing a big role in a bill like the Water Resources Reform and Development Act.

So at this time I will yield, if it is all right, through the Chair. Am I permitted to do this? Can I yield the time that I took to my friend for as much time as she may consume?

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

Ms. LANDRIEU. I thank you, Madam President.

I thank the courtesy of the chairwoman from California and for her really extraordinary leadership to bring such an important infrastructure bill to the floor of the Senate.

Without her dogged determination, we would not be here today and Louisiana and so many other States that are benefiting from the projects authorized and green-lighted in this bill would simply still be waiting, with jobs not being created, people not being employed, and the future looking a lot less bright than it does today. I thank the Senator so very much.

Mrs. BOXER. You're welcome.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Not only has she given attention to her home State of California, but she has been very mindful of several other States in the Union that have particularly difficult water challenges. Louisiana would be one such State. Louisiana is not our largest State. It is not small. It is in the medium size. It has 4.5 million people. But yet our State is positioned geographically in the country, in the Lower 48, that we drain almost 50 percent of the continent. The water of this continent comes through this extraordinary delta almost without peer on the planet. It is the seventh largest delta on Earth.

While some States are struggling to find water, we normally have too much of it in the wrong places—or at times we have too much of it in the wrong places, such as when Lake Pontchartrain breached the drainage project program. The project collapsed and two-thirds of the city of New Orleans went under water—some neighborhoods 14 feet. When Isaac hit or Ike or other hurricanes, we had really been bombarded with tremendous challenges to the southern part of the United States.

Every region has their challenges. But the southern part of the United States, what I like to call America's energy coast—Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama—has particular challenges that need addressing in this

bill. I thank Senator BOXER for addressing some of them, particularly as it relates to Louisiana's challenges because our challenge is not only to keep commerce open for everyone so the entire country can benefit—especially when the Panama Canal opens; larger ships are going to be moving across the oceans into our ports. The Mississippi River port system combines all the four southern ports of the Mississippi River, and it is the largest port system in the world—not second; the largest port system in the world—so we have a responsibility to make sure this commerce continues to move.

So we have to have rivers and bodies of water that are open for commerce but protected with the right kinds of levees that protect the people who live there so we do not drown every time it rains heavily. We are not talking about category 4 and 5 hurricanes. We are talking about highways that go underwater in a heavy rain because the delta is sinking due to several factors. The waters are rising due to several factors. This WRRDA bill is one of the only answers to build a resilient and sustainable coast. That is why the Louisiana delegation fights so hard for it, why we are so anxious for this bill, why we do not like to wait 7 years for a WRDA bill, because we need new authorizations every 2 to 3 years.

In fact, we need a whole new way of funding some of these projects, which is a work in progress. I look forward to continuing to work with Senator BOXER. As an appropriator, I am very anxious to find a new, more expedited way. I have proposed revenue sharing and will continue to propose revenue sharing as a way for not only Louisiana but coastal States to redirect a portion of offshore oil and gas revenues to come back to the coastal communities, America's energy coast, America's working coast, and build the infrastructure that helps our economy continue to grow, create jobs and, most importantly or equally importantly, protect the people that have to live close to the water for those jobs and for those jobs to be made real and for the economy to benefit.

Not everybody can live in Vail, CO, and commute to the coast every day to work. It is not going to happen. We have to live along these rivers, and we have been living there an awfully long time—300 years as far as Natchitoches, Baton Rouge, and New Orleans. They will be celebrating—just three cities in our State—their 300th birthday.

We did not move there in the 1980s to sunbathe. We have been down there for hundreds of years building the economy of this country. We are proud to do it. We are happy to do it. But we need help every now and then. This bill helps us. The WRRDA bill is important.

There are a couple of projects—I am going to finish in about 3 or 4 minutes, and turn it back over to Senator BOXER. First, there is Morganza to the Gulf, which was originally authorized

over 20 years ago. That is going to provide levee and flood control protection to one of the fastest growing, most dynamic cities in this country—Houma, LA. It is an energy epicenter. It is an energy powerhouse for the people of Houma, the fabrication, the supply companies—such as in North Dakota—which is really one of the fastest growing communities in our country.

The Presiding Officer can appreciate this. We are like that on the coast, except that when the hurricanes come, it literally threatens to wash away the whole place because there are no levees around Houma.

The Presiding Officer had terrible flooding in her State, so she can appreciate what happens when the levee system fails. But we are not only along rivers, we are also along the coast, and we are also a strong energy center. It is not just the people and the companies, which range from very small mom-and-pop businesses to some of the largest international energy companies in the world, but it is international fabricators that have billions of dollars of infrastructure along this coast that are at risk.

So this Morganza project, it was not originally in the House bill. I fought very hard to make sure that it was in the Senate version. I want to give Senator VITTER a good bit of credit for his leadership on the committee. I do not want to underestimate the role that he played in securing all of these projects. But we worked together as a team to make sure that Morganza to the Gulf was included.

I am very proud that it was in the final conference report, a \$10.3 billion authorization. The Louisiana coastal area for \$2.1 billion is also included. It is one of the only new starts in the President's budget. It is authorized at a higher level in this bill. Again, we are going to have to find some additional funding, which is where revenue sharing comes in. I hope to convince my colleagues to move in that direction for the benefit of not just our State but for many coastal States in the country.

Building this coastal protection for Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas, Alabama, and Florida is critical, but so are the east coast and the west coast in great need as well. One of the projects—and I have two more to talk about that I am particularly proud of—is the authorization for us to get about the work of dredging the New Iberia port. I have tried to explain it on this floor because we only think about ports such as the traditional big cargo ports.

You think about Long Beach, you think about the Port of Seattle or you think about New York and New Jersey. That is what people think when they think ports. Those are big cargo ports and big container ports. They are very important. But also tucked along our coasts are energy ports that people completely forget about. They do not even know what an energy port looks like. I am very proud to be taking Sec-

retary Moniz to his first energy port next week in Louisiana. These energy ports are not bringing in big containers and big cargo ships, but they are bringing in liquefied natural gas, or taking it out, or they are bringing in oil imported from the rest of the world or exporting—when we can export. But right now they are bringing crude oil in. They are manufacturing the huge platforms and fabricating the huge platforms that go out into the Gulf of Mexico.

Without the proper dredging of those ports, without the proper security of these ports, America cannot be an energy powerhouse. We just cannot do it. We have to have that port infrastructure. So one of my big pushes since I have been a Senator is to try to get the Federal Government to understand that one size does not fit all. There are certain projects that work well for these big container ports and big cargo ports, but there are other important ports in our country, particularly along America's energy coast, which is the Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama coast, the only coast that allows offshore oil and gas drilling, to allow that industry to continue to grow, so that the country prospers and all the States are benefited by the work that goes on there.

So the New Iberia port channel will be dredged deeper. Fabricators will be able to have more projects domestically here and not have to do so much work in Korea and other places around the world. We can produce using American steel, American workers, American fabrication techniques to create jobs right here at home.

Finally, Senator BOXER was so helpful in pressing for the Inland Waterways Trust Fund, to authorize the trust fund, to basically say that moneys that are collected will stay in the trust fund and be used and authorized to help our dams and inland waterways around the country.

Senator CASEY and I have an amendment pending on the floor that would make sure that the increases in user fees could potentially be applied this year so that it is not just an authorization but so there is actually funding in the trust fund to pay for these projects which are so important to keep our maritime industry moving and growing, which is a real feather in our cap right now.

The maritime industry is expanding. It pays much above the average wage. They are really high-paying jobs. Instead of stymieing their growth, we need to be expanding that part of our economy.

So this WRRDA bill, because of Senator BOXER's leadership, first of all, has gotten to the floor for a vote. It never would have happened without her dogged determination. There are wonderful projects, necessary projects for the whole country, but particularly for Louisiana, a State that has an awful lot of water. We are happy to have it, but it has to be directed correctly or it

can cause many disasters and much heartache and pain.

So getting our rivers dredged correctly, getting our levees built so they do not fail, and continuing to be diligent in helping our people live safely along the coast is something that I know Senator BOXER shares with me. The people of California have some similar challenges that she is well aware of in the Sacramento Valley. So I want to thank Senator BOXER. I appreciate her help and her several visits to Louisiana, particularly after the storm, helping to make a firm imprint on her about the importance of this. I am excited about looking into the Netherlands for a possible partner with building even stronger infrastructure using really first class technology for our States.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. I reclaim my time. I want to again say to the Senator that she has made this case. This WRRDA bill is life and death. It truly is in so many of our States. We all saw Katrina. We all saw Superstorm Sandy. I can tell you—I know it sounds like an overstatement, but I can assure you it is not—if we have a situation like that in the Sacramento area, because of the businesses located there and how many people are there—our State has 38 million people—the devastation would be worse than we have ever seen because of the number of people.

This bill takes care of that problem too so we can fix our levees. That is critical. Our levees are falling apart. The Senator has made the case so forcefully for her State, but also she calls attention to the fact that we are experiencing extreme weather. We cannot put our heads in the sand. I was thinking the other day that if you put your head in the sand, you are going to get sand in your eye and you will never be able to see too well.

We have got to get our heads out of the sand. Extreme weather is here. It is here because of climate change. We have to deal with it. My preference is to do what we can to avoid climate change. But it is late in the game even now. So we have to adapt. My friend from Louisiana, I have to say, has been a stalwart in protecting her State.

We have heard from the Senator from Louisiana as to why WRRDA is so important. You have heard a little bit from me. I was talking about the important projects across this Nation. I discussed the one in Texas, through which they move so many military goods. I discussed the one in Florida where they have these cross currents that are dangerous. I began to discuss a project to deepen Boston Harbor to 50 feet. This will prevent heavier road traffic in the busy Northeast corridor by allowing the larger vessels coming through from the newly deepened Panama Canal to transport cargo all the way north to Boston Harbor.

Without that access to Boston, these vessels would have to offload in other

ports and put the cargo on trucks to their final destination in the Northeast. We really have to think about our ports as the alternative, in many cases, to putting cars on the road. In our State, we call it kind of the “sea highway.” Our idea in California is to tie our ports together so there can be a seamless way to transport cargo.

In addition to authorizing crucial port projects, the bill reforms the harbor maintenance trust fund to increase port investment. Despite significant maintenance needs at our Nation’s ports, only roughly half of the fees collected in the harbor maintenance trust fund go to port activities. These are user funds. They ought to be used for the purpose for which they were intended. This conference report calls for a full expenditure of all revenues collected in the trust fund by 2025.

I want to say, I have had some very good talks with the appropriators, Chairman MIKULSKI and Ranking Member SHELBY. They have ports in their great States. They know the need to utilize these funds at the ports. We collect funds for the harbor maintenance trust fund, and then they are going to every other kind of use. It does not make sense. It is not right. I believe in user funds, whether it is the highway trust fund, the harbor maintenance trust fund, whether it is Social Security, Medicare—they are targeted funds. They should stay and be used for those purposes.

We do set priorities for our larger ports, smaller ports, for the Great Lakes, the seaports that are large donors. We say, if you are a large donor port, you ought to deserve to have some attention. I can tell you, I represent the Ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles, through which 40 percent of U.S. container imports pass.

They put so much money into the trust fund and they get so little back. There are many cases like that. I am particularly familiar with these because I hear from the folks from those particular ports.

We also have very important inland waterway systems, and this conference report makes important reforms to those. It is essential for transporting goods throughout the country. These include efforts to expedite project delivery and better prepare for future floods and droughts that can slow or even stop navigation at our inland waterways.

We talked a little bit about extreme weather. In the Presiding Officer’s State, I will never forget, just before your arrival in the Senate, seeing pictures of what was happening in North Dakota with floods and fires. It was just the most apocalyptic scene that Senator Conrad had photos of. It was shocking.

We are seeing more and more of this extreme weather. We need to get ahead of it. We need to do much needed flood control and coastal hurricane protection projects around the country.

We talked a little bit about Sacramento, our State capital. It faces

some of the Nation’s most severe flood risks.

The bill contains flood protection measures that will allow the port to strengthen the levees in the Natomas Basin in Sacramento. Here is how many people will be safeguarded: 100,000 people will be safeguarded and \$8 billion worth of property.

The bill also focuses on lifesaving flood protection for more than 200,000 residents of Fargo, ND, and Moorhead, MN.

We are talking about States all across our great Nation that have to protect their people.

The bill will restore the reliability of the levee system that protects Topeka, KS. These levees protect thousands of homes and businesses in the city, and this project will return over \$13 in benefits for every \$1 invested.

The bill will provide lifesaving protection for coastal communities in coastal Louisiana. We heard from Senator LANDRIEU. Senator VITTER was very strong on this as we worked together.

When we are chairmen, we have to do what is right for the country and also do what is right for our States. The conference report is going to improve our responses to extreme weather events whether they occur in Fargo, Sacramento, or New Orleans.

After the devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina and Superstorm Sandy, it became clear that communities needed assistance to protect lives, property, and to improve infrastructure resiliency. What does “resiliency” mean? It means that you build your infrastructure in a resilient way so that it lasts and doesn’t collapse when you need that protection.

For the first time, this bill allows the Corps to conduct immediate assessments of affected watersheds following an extreme weather event. In the old days, before all this extreme weather, the Corps would come back and fix places and make them just the way they were before the event. Now we are saying: If there is an extreme weather event, please, Corps, identify and look at the ability to construct small flood-control and ecosystem restoration projects, such as levees and floodwalls, and restore wetlands without going through the full study process and receiving additional congressional authorization.

We don’t waive any environmental laws. We just say: When you have an emergency and you can show us there are small projects that can work, just go do it because we want people to have their communities back.

The conference report calls for the Corps to use resilient construction techniques that are far more durable. I remember I was in a big debate with a Republican Senator when we had a bridge collapse after an earthquake—an approach to a bridge—and he said: Well, why are you spending more money than it cost to build it?

I said: Because we don’t want to rebuild it the same way because it didn’t withstand an earthquake.

It is kind of a “duh” moment. You don’t want to spend taxpayer money rebuilding a flawed piece of infrastructure. Make it strong, and make it resilient. That is what we have to do. For the first time, we are going to make sure this happens.

We require the National Academy of Sciences and the GAO to evaluate options for reducing risk. It is not only the Corps going out there. They are going to depend upon the scientists and they are going to depend upon the GAO, the Government Accountability Office.

The bill authorizes investment in vital ecosystem restoration projects across this Nation. These projects not only preserve our precious natural heritage, they also provide essential benefits to local communities, such as improved flood protection and a boost to local tourism.

A lot of people don’t understand the function of a wetland. You see a stretch of wetland and you say: Wow, that is flat land. I can go build on it.

Frankly, over the course of our great Nation’s history, that is what we used to do. We filled in those wetlands. We ignored the fact that they were a gift for us to protect. Not only were they beautiful, a place for wildlife, and they helped the air quality, but they acted as natural flood control. When we hear Senator LANDRIEU discuss this—I went to Louisiana, and I saw how critical that was. The wetlands restoration is critical to absorbing the floodwaters so they don’t destroy property and lives.

WRRDA continues the commitment to restoring one of the Nation’s greatest environmental treasures—the Florida Everglades.

If you have never seen the Florida Everglades, you need to see the Florida Everglades. It is called a river of grass. It is extraordinary. I will never forget it. Senator NELSON invited my husband and me. He, his wife, my husband, and I went out, saw this river of grass, flora and fauna, and deer jumping from a little patch of grass in the water. It is a miracle from God.

What we do is we allow four Everglades restoration projects to move forward.

We also reauthorize important restoration programs in the Chesapeake Bay and the Columbia River Basin. I thank Senator CARDIN for his amazing leadership and, of course, Senator MIKULSKI as well.

We enable the Corps to work with the States along the North Atlantic coast to restore vital coastal habitats from Virginia to Maine, and we allow the Corps to implement projects to better prepare for extreme weather in the Northern Rocky Mountain States of Montana and Idaho.

If you have been following this speech, I think what you will recognize is how broad a swath we cut with the WRRDA bill. We truly tried to step back and help everybody. This is one Nation, and we need to take care of our heritage. That means we have to pro-

tect it from floods and hurricanes, we have to make sure commerce can move forward from our ports, and we want to restore this God-given environment we are supposed to protect.

We direct the Corps to give priority to ecosystem restoration projects that will also provide benefits for public health. This ensures that projects such as the restoration of the Salton Sea—where I live—which both restores vital habitat and addresses serious air-quality concerns, can move forward.

The Salton Sea is amazing. It is an incredible lake. It is the stop-off point for the most amazing array of wildlife. It is drying up. If it continues to go this way, it will not only be a disaster for the wildlife, but it will be a disaster for the people because the odors that are coming from this drying-up sea float all the way to Los Angeles, where we have millions of people. And the jobs we could create there with clean energy and other types of development—we have to move on that.

So I was excited to see that everyone agrees that if you have a body of water that is deteriorating, that, if you don’t pay attention to it, could cause a public health crisis, then it should have some kind of a priority.

The conference report also addresses important ocean and coastal resiliency issues, allowing the Corps to carry out ocean and coastal resiliency projects in coordination with a broad range of stakeholders, including States, Federal agencies, and NGOs.

I compliment SHELDON WHITEHOUSE for the work he put into this provision. It is very important. Our oceans and our coasts are not only magnificent gifts, but they truly are important to our economy.

People who come to California like to see the whole State, but people gravitate to the coast. It is so magnificent, and we have to make sure we treat our coasts and oceans right. That means making sure that if they are endangered, we do something about it.

This is a first. This is exciting for SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, and I am very thrilled to have been able to help him.

I have to give a shout-out to Senator REID, without whom this provision wouldn’t have made it in the bill. We were down to that one issue. We had taken care of 150 issues, but we were down to that one issue. Leader REID was able to help us. And I thank the House for working with us.

I don’t know how many of you have heard of TIFIA, which is a program we expanded in the highway bill. What it does is it leverages funds. So if our States or localities in our States passed a half-cent sales tax to build transportation, the Federal Government now has a way, through the TIFIA Program, to come around up front, take a project that has, say, 20 years of revenue coming in, pay that up-front cost right there, and build that project quickly.

We did the same for water. We call it WIFIA, and it is a new initiative. We

hope that it will be interesting to folks and that they will use it. We will assist localities in need of loans for flood control or wastewater and drinking water infrastructure to receive those loans from this new funding mechanism, the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act.

WIFIA will allow localities an opportunity to move forward with water infrastructure projects in the same way TIFIA does in transportation. Where there is a local source of funding, the Federal Government can front those funds.

The TIFIA Program is working so well. I just went to an amazing press conference with the folks from Los Angeles. They have been given an \$800 million TIFIA loan that is enabling them to build a subway. It is very exciting, and the Federal Government has no risk—almost zero risk—because the funds will be paid back from the sales tax.

These new WIFIA funding arrangements supplement existing programs to help leverage more investment in our Nation’s aging infrastructure. The conference report also updates the Clean Water State Revolving Fund to ensure that our existing sources of water infrastructure funding are able to continue to meet pressing needs.

Chief’s reports: The conference report authorizes 34 critical Army Corps projects where the Chief of Engineers has completed a comprehensive study.

This was an absolute necessity for the Senate. The House and Senate came at this in a very different way. Their priority was making sure they could hold hearings on all the chief’s reports. Our priority was saying: Look, we are not going to go ahead with any project that doesn’t have a completed chief’s report. So that is the “r” for reform—their reform, making sure Congress holds the hearings; our reform, making sure that we include completed chief’s reports.

We are very happy about these chief’s reports. They are all over the Nation. I gave some examples in the beginning of my statement. These projects will restore vital ecosystems, preserve our natural heritage, and maintain navigation routes for commerce and movement of goods.

In the future, looking forward, how are we going to continue, because these WRDA bills come every 7 years. It is very slow. What is a better way to deal with the future needs of our States?

We developed a system with the House that allows local sponsors—such as someone from the State of the Presiding Officer, a flood control agency in the State—to make their case now directly to the Army Corps, and then the Corps would recommend those projects to Congress.

It is interesting that we took ourselves—because of the earmark ban—out of the picture. It allows people from Fargo, from Los Angeles, from Humboldt—wherever they are from—to go and see the Corps and make the case

for their project. Then the Corps would say: We sat down with these local officials. There are 10 or 15 projects we think are important.

That is going to be a new way we are going to give more local input.

I am very excited and happy to be standing on the floor today on this issue because it was 1 year ago almost to the day that the Senate passed the Boxer-Vitter WRDA bill by a vote of 83 to 14. It was just over 1 year ago. It has been 1 year—1 year of being in conference; 1 year of struggling with issue after issue; 1 year of people saying: That is it, we are done, we are walking out the door—wait, come back. It has been a year. When you read how a bill becomes a law, it sounds so simple. It says the House passes a bill, then the Senate passes a bill, then there are conferees and they get together and they work it out, and then it comes back and everyone is smiling and happy and they pass it, and then the bill goes to the President. Well, it is not exactly that way. It is a lot of give and take.

Sometimes you do have a bill that is not as complex as these here, and it can go smoothly. But how a bill becomes a law depends on who is in the room, it depends on what is happening nationwide, it depends on who the President is, and so many different things. But we were able to do this.

So 1 year ago we passed it in the Senate, and tomorrow, I believe, we are going to pass the conference report. The agreement will cost roughly the same as the Senate-passed bill and well below the last WRDA bill. One might ask why? Well, it is because as we authorized new projects, we deauthorized old projects. And that is important. We were able to go better than one-for-one in deauthorizing and authorizing.

Also, we had a very good talk with the CBO—the Congressional Budget Office. It is rare I have ever said a “good talk” with the CBO, because while the Presiding Officer is very good at accounting—a genius at that—I can tell you they do not make any sense to me. But Senator VITTER and I were actually able to persuade them on this bill to be realistic in the way we score it. If a State isn't going to be able to come up with their matching funds for 10 years, don't put this in as a cost in the first year. So the CBO was very open to working with us, and for that I thank them. It is a rarity, putting common sense on the table.

In closing, I thank all of the staff on both sides of the aisle who put in countless hours to develop this bipartisan, bicameral agreement. They didn't just work until midnight, 3 a.m., they worked on it 24/7 for all these months. I thank Bettina Poirier, my incredible chief of staff of the EPW Committee, my chief counsel, our guiding light, our guiding star; Jason Albritton, who is here with me today, who has worked nonstop, and will continue to do it until it is over, right, and get it ready for the President to sign;

and Ted Illston, who is on the floor and is a wonderful, wonderful staffer; and Tyler Rushforth.

These are the key people on my staff. One would think it would be 20 or 30 more, but it is not. It is this handful of people who made this happen for all of us.

I have to say I got to know Senator VITTER's staff so well, and we laughed at times. There was some irony involved in all of this. I would like to thank Zak Baig, Charles Brittingham, Chris Tomassi on Senator VITTER's staff. And Senator VITTER himself. Again, we were able to set aside a lot of differences we have on climate, on environment, on clean air, clean water, safe drinking water, where we go at it—nuclear power safety. We go at it. But we were able to say for the good of the people, we have to show people we can set aside our differences and come together. We did it here, we did it on the highway bill, and now it is time for the Senate to show the American people we can truly come together and pass this bill.

I do want to show one more thing before I leave the floor, and that is some of the organizations that have supported us and that support this bill. I can't read them all; it would take too long, but I will highlight some of these: the AFL-CIO, Transportation Trades Department, the American Association of Port Authorities, the American Concrete Pavement Association—I am passing over a lot of these—the Associated General Contractors of America, the Association of California Water Agencies, the Association of State Dam Safety Officials, the American Road and Transportation Builders Association, the American Farm Bureau Federation.

Let me give a few more. These are the supporters. The Arkansas Waterways Commission, the Big River Coalition, the City of Sacramento, the City of Los Angeles, Concrete Reinforcing Steel Institute, the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund Fairness Coalition, the International Union of Operating Engineers, the International Union of Painters and Allied Trades, the National League of Cities, the National Governors Association, the National Asphalt Paving Association, and the National Association of Clean Water Agencies.

The list goes on. Here are a few more, in case anyone is interested. The National Ready Mix Concrete Association, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the National Stone, Sand, and Gravel Association, the Santa Clara Valley Water District, The Nature Conservancy, the Texas Department of Transportation, the United Association of Plumbers and Pipefitters, the U.S. Society of Dams, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the Vinyl Institute, the Water Resources Coalition, the Waterways Council, Inc.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the entire list of these supporters.

Mrs. BOXER. To those who are listening as I read from this list, it did include the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, it did include the AFL-CIO, Transportation Trades Department, which is so encouraging, and the National Governors Association. And I guess I will read this one:

The nation's governors applaud Congress for reaching an agreement that provides states with the resources to address their critical water infrastructure needs . . . governors urge the House and Senate to pass the WRRDA conference report and send it to the President for signature as soon as possible.

I want to say how much I endorse what the Governors said. Send this bill to the President as soon as possible.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention Congressman SHUSTER, who heads my counterpart committee in the House. Congressman SHUSTER was a delight to work with, even when it got tough for me. We had some tough, tough disagreements, but he stuck with it.

I also want to congratulate him on his victory yesterday, and I want to tell him, through this statement, how much I look forward to working with him on the Transportation bill. If we can do this, we can do that. That is important because we have to keep America moving. We are the greatest Nation on Earth, but you can't be the greatest Nation on Earth if you don't have modern water infrastructure, if your cities are flooding, if your ports can't move products. You can't. And you certainly can't have a great nation when you cannot have a highway system that functions, a transportation system that functions. You can't. There is no such thing. Because if you can't move commerce, if you can't move people, you can't move America forward.

I will say again, my deepest thanks to staff, my deepest thanks to Senator VITTER, my deepest thanks to Senator CARPER, to my entire committee, Senator BARRASSO, to Congressman SHUSTER, to Senator REID, to all of you, because this was one of those labors of love in which we all engage. We all wanted a bill, and we put away our little side arguments, came together, and now we have a bill that is a multibillion-dollar bill that will build our Nation and that is going to help our commerce and it is going to put 500,000 people to work. I couldn't be happier. I look forward to this vote tomorrow.

One more person I will thank: Congressman NICK RAHALL, who worked as the ranking member with Mr. SHUSTER. The two of them were a great team, and we were able to cut across the partisan divide, cut across the House-Senate divide, tough as it was.

It is a great day. It is a great day in the U.S. Senate and in the Congress, and I look forward to the President's signing this bill.

With that, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

#### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is now closed.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

#### NOMINATION OF STANLEY FISCHER TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Stanley Fischer, of New York, to be a Member of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System for a term of four years.

Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Mr. President, I wish to speak in support of Dr. Stanley Fischer to be a member of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System. While we are only voting on Dr. Fischer's nomination to be a member of the Board today, he has also been nominated to be Vice Chair of the Board of Governors, which we will need to vote on in the near future.

As you all know, Dr. Fischer is a distinguished economist who is immensely qualified to serve on the Federal Reserve Board. In his two decades on the MIT faculty, he was primary adviser for 49 Ph.D. students, including former Fed Chairman Ben Bernanke, and current European Central Bank President Mario Draghi. In addition, he has previously served on the frontlines in making public policy decisions during periods of financial crisis—including as the head of the Bank of Israel during the last financial crisis. He is supported by experts from both sides of the aisle and respected by leaders throughout the world. His wisdom on the economy, monetary policy, and banking would be extremely valuable to the Board.

It is important that we move quickly to confirm Dr. Fischer to the Board. Next week, the Federal Reserve Board will only have 3 out of 7 confirmed Board members. In addition to Dr. Fischer, the Senate needs to quickly confirm Dr. Lael Brainard and Mr. Jerome Powell. There is a lot of work to do at the Board, including conducting monetary policy, drafting rules implementing Wall Street reform, and taking other actions to improve financial stability and economic growth, so it is important we fill the Board vacancies with highly qualified nominees like Dr. Fischer as soon as possible.

I urge my colleagues to support Dr. Fischer.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, we yield back all of our time.

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

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Stanley Fischer, of Texas, to be a Member of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System?

Mrs. BOXER. 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. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL) and the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) are necessarily absent.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. AYOTTE), the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN), and the Senator from Indiana (Mr. COATS).

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

The result was announced—yeas 68, nays 27, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 160 Ex.]

#### YEAS—68

Alexander	Franken	Murkowski
Baldwin	Gillibrand	Murphy
Begich	Hagan	Murray
Bennet	Harkin	Nelson
Blumenthal	Hatch	Portman
Booker	Heinrich	Pryor
Boxer	Heitkamp	Reed
Brown	Hirono	Reid
Burr	Isakson	Rockefeller
Cantwell	Johanns	Sanders
Cardin	Johnson (SD)	Schatz
Carper	Kaine	Schumer
Casey	King	Stabenow
Chambliss	Kirk	Tester
Coburn	Klobuchar	Udall (CO)
Collins	Landrieu	Udall (NM)
Coons	Leahy	Walsh
Corker	Levin	Warner
Cornyn	Manchin	Warren
Donnelly	Markey	Whitehouse
Durbin	Menendez	Wicker
Feinstein	Merkley	Wyden
Flake	Mikulski	

#### NAYS—27

Barrasso	Heller	Risch
Blunt	Hoeven	Roberts
Cochran	Inhofe	Rubio
Crapo	Johnson (WI)	Scott
Cruz	Lee	Sessions
Enzi	McCain	Shelby
Fischer	McConnell	Thune
Graham	Moran	Toomey
Grassley	Paul	Vitter

#### NOT VOTING—5

Ayotte	Coats	Shaheen
Boozman	McCaskill	

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table. 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 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:47 p.m., recessed until 2 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Ms. BALDWIN).

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

#### CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 10 minutes of debate equally divided in the usual form prior to a vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the Barron nomination.

The Senator from Louisiana.

#### GREEN NOMINATION

Ms. LANDRIEU. Madam President, the Senate is about to proceed to several votes on important nominees, and I wanted to put in a strong word of support for James Walter Green, who has been nominated by the President to serve as U.S. attorney for the Middle District of Louisiana.

I was very pleased to recommend Mr. Green to the President for his consideration. I strongly urge my colleagues to vote with me to confirm him today. He has served our country in a variety of capacities, most notably 20 years of military service. He has been involved in multiple deployments, is the recipient of numerous military awards, including the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, the Combat Action Ribbon, and the Iraq Campaign Medal.

Not only is he a strong patriot who has been of extraordinary service to our country, he has also served for an additional 15 years in a variety of capacities in this office and supported their work through Republican and Democratic administrations.

He comes highly recommended by a broad cross section of individuals in my State, and I am pleased I was able to recommend this kind of high-caliber person to continue to serve in the full capacity as U.S. attorney.

Mr. Green will bring a wealth of legal experience to his role as U.S. Attorney for the Middle District of Louisiana. He has served in a variety of roles within the U.S. Attorney's office in both the Baton Rouge and Las Vegas offices, including as a trial attorney, trial section supervisor, acting criminal chief, acting administrative officer and first assistant U.S. attorney.

He is currently the acting U.S. Attorney for the Middle District of Louisiana and a member of the U.S. Marine Corps Reserves.

I have every confidence that James Walter Green will be exceptional in his role as the chief Federal law enforcement official in the Middle District of Louisiana.

I thank Senator DURBIN for his courtesy. I wanted to put in a strong word for this nominee. He is supported by both Senator VITTER and myself, and I hope to get a strong vote on him today.

I ask that the time be equally divided between the majority and minority.