

I deeply respect her commitment to consumer interests. She is widely acknowledged for her keen judgment and insight on all these issues, advancing smart telecommunications policy for the public benefit.

She is a graduate of Wesleyan University and New York University Law School. Her career has been about telecommunications law, which included time as senior communications counsel for the Senate Commerce Committee under the leadership of both Senator Rockefeller and Senator Inouye.

In her time on the Commission, she has been a champion of consumers, students, emergency responders, of everyday working men and women who deserve the best system and protection of their interests when it comes to telecommunications.

There was an agreement that ought to be respected, but as important or even more important than an agreement, she deserves and the country needs for her to serve as a Commissioner.

I urge my colleagues to reconfirm her swiftly and overwhelmingly so that she can continue to do this vital and important work she has been doing.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

#### CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk for the Alexander substitute amendment No. 3801.

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

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 Senate amendment No. 3801 to Calendar No. 96, H.R. 2028, an act making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

Mitch McConnell, Lamar Alexander, Jerry Moran, John Boozman, Steve Daines, Richard Burr, Roy Blunt, Orrin G. Hatch, John Hoeven, John Thune, Thad Cochran, Roger F. Wicker, Mark Kirk, John McCain, Lindsey Graham, Johnny Isakson, Pat Roberts.

#### CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk for the underlying bill, H.R. 2028.

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

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 Calendar No. 96, H.R. 2028, an act making appropriations for energy and water development and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes.

Mitch McConnell, Lamar Alexander, Jerry Moran, John Boozman, Steve Daines, Richard Burr, Roy Blunt, Orrin G. Hatch, John Hoeven, John Thune, Thad Cochran, Roger F. Wicker, Mark Kirk, John McCain, Lindsey Graham, Johnny Isakson, Pat Roberts.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum calls with respect to the cloture motions be waived.

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

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the filing deadline for all first-degree amendments to both the Alexander substitute amendment No. 3801 and the underlying bill, H.R. 2028, be at 2:30 p.m., Tuesday, April 26.

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

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

#### EARTH DAY

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, last Friday marked the 46th annual Earth Day, and we cannot ignore that we are at a crossroads in time. Human-caused climate change is accelerating with each passing year and is now taking a severe toll on our planet. We see it in our scorched farmlands and burnt forests in the West and in the flood ravaged river valleys and superstorm battered coastlines in the East. Climate change is not a hoax, and we must act now to protect our future and our future generations.

Earth Day is an opportunity to recognize that climate change is not only the greatest threat to our environment today, but it also poses a threat to public health and to our national and economic security. In coming years, the economy of Vermont, the United States, and every country on Earth will be altered. We must guide that economic transformation to protect future generations.

We are really just beginning to grapple with the serious economic consequences of climate change across the country. In Vermont, we saw the warmest winter on record this year, with mean temperatures 5 to 10 degrees above normal and snowfall several feet below normal. On Christmas Eve, the mercury hit 68 degrees in the State

capital of Montpelier, beating the previous record by 17 degrees. The abnormally high temperatures and lack of snow hurt our ski and tourism industries. Many ski areas saw business down 20 percent, and some saw a drop of as much as 40 percent. This does not just impact the ski areas and the mountains, but also our restaurants, local hotels, contractors, and other businesses that are driven by the ski industry.

Climate change could also impact Vermont's maple industry, which contributes more than \$300 million in sales to Vermont's economy every year. While 2016 has been a successful year for producing maple syrup, if temperatures continue to rise each year, in the short term we could face reduced sap quality and even a decrease in the amount of sap produced. I am also very concerned that, in the long term, our sugar maple stands could be decimated by invasive pests or threatened by drought and forest fires. The agriculture and fisheries sector is highly dependent on specific climate conditions, and maple production will not be the only agricultural industry affected. The Pacific Northwest's winemakers, Alaska's salmon fisheries, the Southeast's peanut producers, and corn growers in the Midwest could all face significant climate-related challenges.

The threats posed by climate change are numerous and can be downright frightening. However, Earth Day—and every day—we must remember that, if we can have such a profound negative impact on our environment, we can also have a profound positive affect on the drivers of climate change. If we make climate the top priority around which we organize and refocus economic decisions, we can find solutions to climate risk through creative thinking and innovation. While climate change does represent one of the greatest challenges of our time, we should see it as opportunity to nurture and attract entrepreneurship, rather than dragging our heels or denying that there is a problem.

I am proud that time after time Vermonters continue to come together to identify solutions to big problems. I am amazed and energized every day by Vermont innovators who are thinking creatively and already leading nationally and internationally. Vermont businesses, nonprofits, and educational institutions are already tackling big problems and finding solutions to climate change, solutions that are being readied to be deployed in Vermont and exported around the world. Just last week, I had joined leaders from the University of Vermont to announce a National Science Foundation competitive award of \$20 million to Vermont EPSCoR, which will support research of the Lake Champlain Basin and its watersheds to find out what has made some parts of the basin resilient in the face of extreme weather events, while