

I said: Does there appear to be any correlation between this flat line and this rise in temperature?

He again said: I just don't understand the data. I can't really comment on that.

Yet anyone with any basic ability to digest information would recognize that there was no correlation. You didn't have two things moving in the same direction.

Then I put up this chart right here. This chart shows that same temperature, observe the black line, and then it shows the line for rising carbon dioxide. I said: Well, are these things correlated?

Do you see any relationship between one line rising and the other line rising?

Again, he refused to answer.

How is it that we can put someone into a position who cannot even look at and comment on basic data, who has been a hired hand for the fossil fuel industry, who has fought to make our air filthier and more damaging to our health?

That is the nominee we have, a nominee who has sued on behalf of very powerful interests—the EPA, 31 times—to try to degrade the controls for things like mercury, which is a potent neurotoxin that damages the brains of, particularly, our children. Why should we have somebody who wants more mercury in our air in this position to consider air quality? It, certainly, does not make any sense to me.

He did have a chance to serve in this position, in an acting capacity, back in

2006. So he has been there before. He adopted guidelines on mercury emissions that had entire passages lifted word for word from information that had been provided by the industry. The industry did not want to regulate the mercury, and he just took its language and said that that is what we will do, that we will do what industry says. He was not working for the American people. He was working for the powerful and the privileged.

Then he told an EPA staffer “not to undertake the normal scientific and economic studies” when crafting important rules. He instructed his staff not to look at the scientific information when constructing rules. What did he want them to look at? He wanted them to just take the language from industry. That is certainly not protecting the public interest. As the New York Times wrote, he has sought to “elevate corporate interests above those of the public.”

This is not a position in a company. This is not a position in a corporation. This is a position of public trust. He has failed that test. In fact, he has failed it so badly that, although he was nominated in 2006 when there was a Republican majority in this Chamber, his nomination was subsequently rejected by the Senate. Back then, we had folks who really, actually cared on both sides of the aisle far more about air quality. Now it seems like the enormous amount of funding from the Koch brothers for campaigns across the country has squelched any consideration from my colleagues about the

quality of the air or the quality of our water. This nomination is, certainly, a test of that.

If my colleagues do care about the quality of our air, they will act like their predecessors did back in 2006, and they will reject this nomination. An individual who has betrayed the public trust should not be confirmed to a position of public trust.

Thank you.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 9:30 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 7:03 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, November 9, 2017, at 9:30 a.m.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate November 8, 2017:

NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD

PETER B. ROBB, OF VERMONT, TO BE GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD FOR A TERM OF FOUR YEARS.

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

MELISSA SUE GLYNN, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (ENTERPRISE INTEGRATION).

CHERYL L. MASON, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF VETERANS' APPEALS FOR A TERM OF SIX YEARS.

RANDY REEVES, OF MISSISSIPPI, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR MEMORIAL AFFAIRS.