

order issued by the Secretary of Labor pursuant to the procedures set forth in section 42121(b) of title 49, United States Code, the Secretary of Labor or the person on whose behalf the order was issued may bring a civil action to enforce the order in the district court of the United States for the judicial district in which the violation occurred.

“(c) REMEDIES.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—A covered individual prevailing in any action under subsection (b)(1) shall be entitled to all relief necessary to make the covered individual whole.

“(2) COMPENSATORY DAMAGES.—Relief for any action under paragraph (1) shall include—

“(A) reinstatement with the same seniority status that the covered individual would have had, but for the discrimination;

“(B) the amount of back pay, with interest; and

“(C) compensation for any special damages sustained as a result of the discrimination including litigation costs, expert witness fees, and reasonable attorney’s fees.

“(d) RIGHTS RETAINED BY WHISTLEBLOWERS.—Nothing in this section shall be deemed to diminish the rights, privileges, or remedies of any covered individual under any Federal or State law, or under any collective bargaining agreement.”.

VALOR ACT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H.R. 3949, which was received from the House.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3949) to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for the designation of State approving agencies for multi-State apprenticeship programs for purposes of the educational assistance programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The bill (H.R. 3949) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

VA PRESCRIPTION DATA ACCOUNTABILITY ACT 2017

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 1545 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

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

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1545) to amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify the authority of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to disclose certain patient information to State controlled substance monitoring programs, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The bill (H.R. 1545) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.

RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TODAY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the en bloc consideration of the following Senate resolutions which were submitted earlier today: S. Res. 332, S. Res. 333, and S. Res. 334.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolutions en bloc.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolutions be agreed to, the preamble, where applicable, be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table, all en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 332) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today’s RECORD under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

The resolutions (S. Res. 333 and S. Res. 334) were agreed to.

(The resolutions are printed in today’s RECORD under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2017

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, November 16; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; finally, that following leader remarks, the Senate proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the Otting nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of Senator MERKLEY.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Oregon.

CLIMATE DISRUPTION

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, climate disruption is the seminal challenge of our generation. It affects everything from our farms to our forests, to our fisheries. We are seeing huge impacts around the world: disappearing ice in the Arctic, melting permafrost, dying coral, raging fires, more powerful storms. Everywhere you look it is having an impact, and it is certainly an impact we need to pay a great deal of attention to because it is hurting human civilization, and the impacts are just beginning. They are going to become worse over time.

In response, communities across the globe are transforming their energy economies. They are certainly making their energy economies more efficient, from increasing insulation in buildings to improving vehicle mileage, to greater efficiency in appliances and in replacing fossil fuel energy with clean renewable energy.

How much do you know about the changes underway, about the dramatic modifications of our energy economy and the impacts of climate disruption? Let’s find out. Welcome to episode 8 of the Senate Climate Disruption Quiz. Here we go.

First question. Researchers predict there will be an ice-free Arctic by the summer of what year?

Will it be the year 2020, 3 years from now; the year 2030, the year 2075, or will it be 2100, the end of the century?

Lock in your answers.

Here is the correct answer. That is B, the year 2030. Researchers say that as early as 2030, the Arctic Ocean could lose all of its ice during the year’s warmest months.

We see here a map of what has been happening in the past. The red outlines, in addition to the white, represents where the ice was in 1980. In 1998, less area is covered; in 2012, even less area is covered; and in the last two summers, the Northwest Passage has been free of ice, and that has enabled a ship called the Crystal Serenity to move up and essentially take tourists through the Northwest Passage, where you can see it was ice-covered in 1980. So that is a big change.

If we have an effort to address the improvements made in Paris, then, yes, there would still be ice here in that year of 2030, in an area about the size of India, but you can see it is really shrinking quickly.

OK. On to our second question. Over the next decade, the number of U.S. wind energy technicians is expected to decline by 10 percent; grow by over 100 percent, which is to double; remain about stable; or disappear entirely?

Lock in your answers.

The correct answer is B, grow by over 100 percent. In other words, it will double. These are good jobs. Last year, less

than 100,000 people were employed in some manner by the wind industry, and the median pay was about \$51,000 a year—a good middle-class job. We are seeing the jobs grow as the demand for wind energy grows throughout the country. The American Wind Energy Association says that in just the first 3 months of 2017, 2,000 megawatts of wind power were added, which is almost a fourfold increase over what happened in the first 3 months of 2016. So big changes are happening quickly.

Question No. 3. President Trump's administration released a study in November, the National Climate Assessment. Did President's Trump's study attribute the major cause of climate disruption to volcanic activity, or did his study say that the major cause was natural cycle, human activity, or solar activity?

Lock in your answers.

The answer is, on this study from President Trump's team, not volcanic activities, not solar activity, and not a natural cycle. It was, in fact, human activity.

This is a study from the Trump administration. They produced a chart that looked at the temperature increase and measured how much can be attributed to human-caused activity. You can see the chart here, how much was attributed to solar—very little impact—and how much can be attributed to volcanic activity, and that was actually negative. So the Trump administration has produced a huge statement that human activity is causing the increase of the temperature of our planet.

Question No. 4. Why did India shut down New Delhi's schools—that is 4,000 schools—why did they shut down New Delhi's schools for several days in November? Was it, A, lead in the water; B, religious tensions; C, record air pollution; or, D, population explosion?

Lock in your answers.

The correct answer is, in fact, record air pollution. This can be measured, but you can also see it. I will put up a picture of that pollution in New Delhi. Now we can barely see these people from a short distance away riding a motorcycle. The father is clamping his hand over his son's face to help reduce

the impact of the air pollution on the children.

This air pollution was considered to be equivalent to smoking 50 cigarettes a day. The doctors are saying kids coming in who should have pink lungs have dark lungs—gray, black lungs. So it is having a huge health impact.

The U.S. Embassy in New Delhi measures the air quality by a category that is known as particulate matter, PM2.5. It refers to miniscule particulate matter of diameters of 2.5 micrometers or less. These are the very tiny particles that can lodge deep in the lungs and cause all kinds of problems in the lungs as they are absorbed into the bloodstream.

The EPA standard—the Environmental Protection Agency standard—considers anything between 151 and 200 as unhealthy. What they registered on this day was 1,000. It topped the 1,000 mark. You can understand then how dangerous that is. This is from burning fossil fuels causing this pollution and specifically burning coal.

That brings us to our final question, Question No. 5. What percent of American voters support staying in the Paris Agreement? This, of course, is the international agreement in which every country in the world is now involved. Recently, there were two countries that had not signed up, and that was Nicaragua and Syria, but they now have both signed up. President Trump has said he plans to leave. Technically, we are still signed up because he can't leave under the agreement until November 2020. Still, because he said we are planning to leave, it has produced a lot of reaction by American citizens and those for and against.

What percent of American voters support staying in? Is it zero; 15 percent, a little more than one out of eight; or 45 percent, just shy of half; or 70 percent?

Lock in your answers.

Well, the Yale Program on Climate Communication did a poll which was released earlier this year, and the answer is that 70 percent, 7 out of 10 Americans, say stay in. Now this support for the Paris Agreement is more than half for every party, including the unaffiliated or independent voters. It is

very high among Democrats, 86 percent; among Independents it is 61 percent; but 51 percent, more than one out of every two Republicans say, yes, stay in. They also took a look at self-identified voters for President Trump, and, there again, more than one out of two, a majority of them, said to stay in.

So there you have it, folks. Episode 8 of the Climate Disruption Quiz, issues ripped from the headlines on the most important issue facing the survival of humankind on this planet.

Carbon dioxide levels are accelerating and running through the roof. The temperature of our planet is accelerating. Our planet has caught a fever, and there is no doctor for the planet. We have to address it. We have to act. We are the first generation to experience the impacts and the last generation that can head off catastrophic consequences.

We are racing with the clock. There is no time to spare. So stay engaged, and in the future, I will bring you episode 9 of the Senate Climate Disruption Quiz.

Thank you.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M.
TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate stands adjourned until 9:30 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 7:04 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, November 16, 2017, at 9:30 a.m.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate November 15, 2017:

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

DAVID G. ZATEZALO, OF WEST VIRGINIA, TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF LABOR FOR MINE SAFETY AND HEALTH.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

MARK T. ESPER, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

BOBBY L. CHRISTINE, OF GEORGIA, TO BE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF GEORGIA FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS.

DAVID J. FREED, OF PENNSYLVANIA, TO BE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA FOR THE TERM OF FOUR YEARS.