

Accountable.US Case Study: The Nomination Of Debra Haaland

SUMMARY: On January 20, 2021, President Joe Biden formally nominated Debra Haaland as Secretary of the Interior, making her the first Native American person to be nominated to a cabinet secretary position. Haaland is an enrolled member of the Pueblo of Laguna in New Mexico and was serving as a U.S. Representative at the time of her nomination. Haaland received broad bipartisan support after she was announced as the nominee, and Native American advocacy groups and tribal leaders celebrated her appointment as historic.

Republican lawmakers and oil industry groups, however, began viciously attacking Haaland over her support for the Green New Deal and her past statements opposing fracking. Republican Senators on the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources (ENR) cast Haaland as a “radical” threat to a Western “way of life,” despite her having one the strongest bipartisan records among freshmen congressmembers and having lived in New Mexico for her entire life. Haaland’s supporters said that Republicans’ description of Haaland as “radical” was a dog whistle referencing her tribal status and gender. Republican Senators overseeing the nominations of other Biden nominees invoked similar language in their attempts to block the confirmations of other people of color.

Republicans were motivated to block Haaland’s nomination by their political and financial ties to the oil and gas industry. At the time of Haaland’s nomination, Senate Republicans on ENR Committee had taken nearly \$8.8 million in oil and gas donations. Oil-tied Senate Republicans mounted a smear campaign against her in an attempt to obstruct Biden’s environmental agenda and appease the very polluters that bankroll their campaigns. Industry groups chimed in ahead of Haaland’s hearings, echoing Republicans’ fearmongering about her being a “radical” choice for the Department of the Interior.

The Senate ultimately voted to confirm (51-40) Haaland as Secretary of the Interior on March 15, 2021, despite intense opposition from oil lobbying groups and Republicans’ numerous attempts to block her nomination.

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NOMINATION TIMELINE

Haaland’s Nomination Proceeded Through The Senate Relatively Quickly Despite Some Republicans’ Efforts To Block Her Appointment Entirely

In December 2020, President Biden announced his intent to nominate Deb Haaland as Secretary of the Interior at the Department of the Interior. Haaland was officially nominated on January 20, 2021,

and confirmed by the Senate on March 15, 2021. Although her nomination proceeded more quickly than the average Biden Department of the Interior nominee, Republican Senators and Representatives attempted to block her nomination at multiple points in the confirmation process, including two Senators on the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources who used procedural rules to delay the full Senate vote.

Status	Date Nomination Was Received By Senate	Hearing Date	Floor Vote / Confirmation Date	Days From Nomination To Hearing	Days From Hearing To Confirmation	Days From Nomination To Confirmation
Confirmed	1/20/21	2/23/21	3/15/21	34	20	54
DOI Average (As Of 1/14/22)				52.11	70.50	102.67
DIFFERENCE				Received a hearing 18 days sooner than average for DOI nominees	Confirmed 50 days sooner than average for DOI nominees	Confirmed 48 days sooner than average for DOI nominees

December 2020: President Biden Announced His Intent To Nominate Rep. Debra Haaland As Secretary Of The Interior

In December 2020, President-Elect Joe Biden Announced His Intent To Nominate Rep. Debra Haaland As Secretary Of The Interior. “In a historic first, President-elect Joe Biden will nominate Rep. Deb Haaland to lead the Department of the Interior, his transition team announced Thursday evening.” [NPR, [12/17/2020](#)]

At The Time She Was Nominated, Deb Haaland Was A Democratic Member Of The U.S. House Of Representatives, Representing New Mexico's 1st Congressional District. [GovTrack, Accessed [6/21/2022](#)]

During Her Time In Congress, Haaland Served As Vice Chair Of The House Natural Resources Committee And Chair Of The National Parks, Forests, And Public Lands Subcommittee. “As Vice Chair of the House Natural Resources Committee and Chair of the National Parks, Forests, and Public Lands subcommittee, Rep. Haaland is a proven leader and the right person to lead the charge against the existential threats of our time – tackling the climate, biodiversity, extinction and COVID-19 crises, and racial justice inequities on our Federal public lands and waters.” [The Wilderness Society, [2/16/2021](#)]

Haaland Has Been A Leading Advocate For Limiting Gas Drilling On Public Lands, Including Sacred Indigenous Sites. “In 2017, when Trump opened up the Bears Ears monument -home to thousands of Indigenous ancestral sites- to oil and gas energy exploration, Haaland led the fight and gave a voice to the most affected by the issue.” [Climate Power, [2/23/2021](#)]

Haaland Is An Enrolled Member Of The Pueblo Of Laguna in New Mexico. “In selecting 60-year-old Haaland, a member of Pueblo of Laguna, Biden has placed the descendant of the original people to populate North America atop a 171-year-old institution that has often had a fraught relationship with the nation’s 574 federally recognized tribes.” [Washington Post, [12/17/2021](#)]

Haaland Was The First Native American Person Nominated—And Later Confirmed—To A Cabinet Secretary Position. “In an historic election year that saw the first African American and first Asian American woman elected vice president of the United States, the first woman nominated for treasury secretary, and the

first openly gay man nominated to a cabinet position, yet another first was announced this Thursday: Rep. Deb Haaland (D-N.M.) as the nominee for secretary of the interior. If confirmed, she will become the first Native American to hold a cabinet position, and will be the second-highest-ranking enrolled Native American ever to serve in the federal government.” [Brookings, [12/18/2020](#)]

INITIAL MEDIA REACTION TO HAALAND

Deb Haaland’s Nomination Announcement Received Broad Bipartisan Support And Was Celebrated By Native American Advocacy Groups, Tribal Leaders, And Environmental Groups

Native American And Environmental Advocacy Groups Praised Biden’s Historic Nomination Of Deb Haaland, As She Was Poised To Become The First Native American To Hold A Cabinet Secretary Position

Native American Organizations, Tribal Leaders, And Current And Former Government Officials Praised Haaland’s Historic Nomination. “Thursday’s announcement that President-elect Joe Biden has picked Rep. Deb Haaland (D-NM) to be the next secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior was historic because as a tribal citizen of the Pueblo of Laguna, she will be the first American Indian to serve in a presidential cabinet. The announcement drew praise and celebration across Indian Country. Several national American Indian organizations, tribal leaders and members of Congress released statements on the historic nomination.” [Native News Online, [12/18/2020](#)]

Biden’s Nomination Of Haaland Marked “A Turning Point In Valuing The Experiences, Knowledge, And Leadership Of Native American Nations.” “The Department of the Interior has oversight of federal lands and waterways as well as the plants, animals, and natural resources located there. The department also manages the U.S. government’s relationship with Native American nations via the Bureau of Indian Affairs. That bureau has a notorious history: stripping ownership of tribal reservation lands under the Dawes Act, instituting Indian boarding schools, and carrying out the Indian Termination Era... Rep. Haaland’s nomination marks a turning point in valuing the experiences, knowledge, and leadership of Native American nations, which would have been unimaginable in previous presidential administrations.” [Brookings, [12/18/2020](#)]

Hundreds Of Native American And Environmental Justice Groups Expressed Support For Haaland’s Nomination, Citing Her Experience In Climate, Conservation, And Energy Issues. “In a letter publicly released today, nearly 500 national and regional organizations representing millions of people, including Native American, environmental justice, Western communities and outdoor business have urged Senators in party and committee leadership to confirm Rep. Deb Haaland as Secretary of the Interior (DOI)... Citing her considerable credentials on climate, conservation and energy issues as a member of Congress, as well as the overdue need to have a Native American lead the cabinet agency given its historic injustices tribal nations, the groups said Haaland is a historic pick by the Biden administration.” [The Wilderness Society, [2/16/2021](#)]

RIGHT-WING ATTACKS ON HAALAND

Conservative Media Coverage Of Haaland’s Nomination Struck A Condescending Tone, Dismissing Her Credentials And The Historic Nature Of Her Nomination As “Identity Politics”

Fox News Host Tucker Carlson Mocked The Celebration Of Haaland’s Historic Nomination, Disparaging Her Native American Ancestry As An “Accident Of Birth.” “What does Deb Haaland plan to do with all this

power? Well, no one's asked her. They're too busy celebrating what she looks like... It's 'very exciting' that Deb Haaland is a Native American. That's CNN's position. They don't explain why it's exciting, but it's a good question. Why is it exciting? None of us choose how we were born. It's nothing that we did or earned, so it seems a little weird to be 'excited' about an accident of birth." [Media Matters, [3/8/2021](#)]

Tucker Carlson Said Haaland's Nomination Played Into "Disgusting" And "Stupid And Immoral" Identity Politics. "Since we're playing into identity politics here, which obviously is disgusting, and we wish we weren't—identity politics is stupid and immoral—but since we are, it's fair to ask a few more questions. Deb Haaland identifies as a Native American. On the other hand, Haaland sounds very much like a Scandinavian name. That stuck out to some of us who have Scandinavian names, so what's going on here?" [Media Matters, [3/8/2021](#)]

Tucker Carlson Mocked The Historical Significance Of Haaland's Nomination For Native Americans, Sarcastically Suggesting That Haaland's Norwegian Heritage Makes Her Appointment Significant To "The Nordic People." "Well, in fact Deb Haaland is every bit as much Scandinavian as she is American Indian. Her father was Norwegian. And that means in addition to everything else, Deb Haaland is America's first Norwegian-American Interior Secretary since Thomas Kleppe served in the Ford Administration almost fifty years ago. In their quiet brooding way, the Scandinavian community, we can tell you, is beaming with pride. Finally one of ours has made it. Little girls with names like Larson, Hanson and Dahl will watch Cabinet meetings on C-SPAN and know that they too have a chance to oversee one-fifth of the American land mass someday. When Deb Haaland speaks, she'll be speaking for millions of Norwegian-Americans, people whose ancestors have been here in the Americas for more than 1,000 years. Their voices can now be heard. Deb Haaland, hero to the Nordic people. She's welcome in our sauna anytime." [Media Matters, [3/8/2021](#)]

Fox News: Democrats Are "Weaponizing Identity Politics" By Asserting That The Vicious Attacks On Biden's Nominees Of Color Are Motivated By Prejudice. "Prominent Democrats in Washington are weaponizing identity politics to defend some of President Biden's most controversial Cabinet nominees from criticism. Neera Tanden, Rep. Deb Haaland, D-N.M. and California Attorney General Xavier Becerra have all faced intense scrutiny for their policy positions and public statements, but some Democrats are suggesting that the nominees' critics are motivated by prejudice." [Fox News, [2/24/2021](#)]

Paul Gessing, President Of Libertarian Think Tank The Rio Grande Foundation, Wrote A Patronizing Op-Ed In The National Review Warning That Haaland Would Be A "Cheerleader" For Biden's Climate Agenda. "At Interior, Deb Haaland would be a cheerleader for Biden's early anti-energy policies and would likely look for opportunities to expand upon them. She has taken radically anti-fossil-fuel positions throughout her political career. In 2016, prior to being elected to Congress, Haaland traveled to North Dakota to cook food for the protesters demonstrating against the Dakota Access Pipeline. She stayed in the camps for four days that September." [The National Review, [2/23/2021](#)]

- **Gessing Insinuated That Haaland, Who Was Widely Praised For Her Credentials On Climate And Energy Issues, Does Not Understand Environmental Issues.** "Are Haaland's positions and opinions based on sound science and history? In a 2019 *Los Alamos Monitor* story, Haaland claimed that 'climate change in the U.S. started when Europeans arrived and started killing the buffalo.' Considering the numerous, dramatic changes that were a feature of the climate in prehistoric North America (and everywhere else on this planet), Haaland's understanding of environmental forces is a bit off." [The National Review, [2/23/2021](#)]

Industry Groups That Opposed Biden's Climate Agenda Released Statements Ahead Of Haaland's Hearings Making Baseless Claims That Her "Radical" Views Would Hurt The Economy

Oil Lobbying Groups, Including Western Energy Alliance And American Energy Alliance, Used Debunked Data About Biden’s Executive Action Pausing New Federal Leases For Drilling To Attack Haaland’s Nomination

Oil Lobbying Group Western Energy Alliance Launched A Fearmongering Ad Campaign The Day Before Haaland’s Hearings, Running It In Three Of The States Represented By Republican Senators Who Participated In Haaland’s Confirmation Hearings.

One Day Before Haaland’s Confirmation Hearings, Western Energy Alliance Launched A Two-Week Ad Campaign To “Educate Westerners On The Economic Costs” Of President Biden’s Pause On New Leases For Drilling On Federal Land. “Western Energy Alliance today launched an advertising campaign to educate westerners on the economic costs of President Biden’s ban on new oil and natural gas leasing on public lands. The ad highlights that nearly 58,700 jobs a year will be lost under the president’s recent executive order as well as \$8.3 billion for vital public services for all citizens in eight states across the West.” [Western Energy Alliance, [2/22/2021](#)]

Western Energy Alliance Spent Thousands On Dollars On Their Ad Campaign Making Exaggerated Claims About President Biden’s Pause On New Leases For Oil And Gas Drilling. “The oil and natural gas industry is running a new advertising campaign to fight President Biden’s halt to leasing for drilling on federal land. The Western Energy Alliance said it’s spending several thousand dollars on its new radio campaign in New Mexico, Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, North Dakota and other states where it expects the leasing ban to hit hardest. The ad cites research published last year from the Wyoming state government that forecasts the loss of 57,800 jobs each year. The ban also threatens affordable gasoline and funding for public schools, police and firefighters, WEA said.” [Politico, [2/23/2021](#)]

Western Energy Alliance Said It Intentionally Launched Its Ad Campaign At The Same Time As Haaland’s Senate Confirmation Hearings. “The Alliance’s two-week ad campaign starts today as the U.S. Senate considers the nomination of Rep. Deb Haaland as Secretary of the Interior. If confirmed, Haaland would administer Biden’s leasing ban, which the Alliance is challenging in court. The ad is running on digital music streaming services in states that produce the most oil and natural gas on public lands including New Mexico, Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, and North Dakota.” [Western Energy Alliance, [2/22/2021](#)]

Western Energy Alliance Said Its Ads Would Run In New Mexico, Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, And North Dakota. “The Alliance’s two-week ad campaign starts today as the U.S. Senate considers the nomination of Rep. Deb Haaland as Secretary of the Interior. If confirmed, Haaland would administer Biden’s leasing ban, which the Alliance is challenging in court. The ad is running on digital music streaming services in states that produce the most oil and natural gas on public lands including New Mexico, Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, and North Dakota.” [Western Energy Alliance, [2/22/2021](#)]

Western Energy Alliance’s Ad Ran In Three Of The States Represented By Energy Committee Members— John Barrasso (R-WY), John Hoeven (R-ND), and Mike Lee (R-UT). [C-SPAN, [2/23/2021](#)]

Western Energy Alliance’s Ad Makes Misleading Claims That President Biden’s Executive Order “Bans Leasing On Public Lands,” Citing The “58,000 Jobs Lost” Figure From A Wyoming Energy Authority Study That WEA Funded. “Affordable gas for my car. A job I can be proud of. A good school for my kids. Money for our police and firefighters. Oil and Natural Gas Produced In Our State Makes These essentials possible. But an executive order by President Biden that bans leasing on public lands risks it all, including as many as 58,000 jobs a year. It’s more politics, while real Americans suffer. We need your help to reverse this decision.” [Western Energy Alliance, [2/22/2021](#)]

- **In December 2020, The Wyoming Energy Authority Released A Study On Leasing Federal Lands For Oil And Gas Extraction, Which Was Secretly Funded By Oil Lobbying Group Western Energy Alliance (WEA).** “Reporting by Documented and POLITICO reveals that a widely cited study

from the University of Wyoming on leasing federal lands for oil and gas extraction was secretly funded by the oil and gas industry.” [Documented, [2/4/2021](#)]

- **The Wyoming Energy Authority Insisted That The Study Was Funded Solely By The State Legislature, And The Study “Makes No Mention Of Funding From The Oil And Gas Industry.”** “The study, released in December of 2020 by a Wyoming state agency, makes no mention of funding from the oil and gas industry. Instead, the agency that published the study, the Wyoming Energy Authority, claimed the study was only funded by the Wyoming legislature. The Wyoming Governor’s Office and credulous reporters repeated the assertion that the study was funded solely by an appropriation in the Wyoming budget.” [Documented, [2/4/2021](#)]
- **Wyoming Energy Authority Executive Director Eventually Admitted That The Report Was Partially Funded By Western Energy Alliance.** “When pressed by POLITICO, Wyoming Energy Authority Executive Director Glen Murrell admitted that the oil lobbying group Western Energy Alliance financed outreach and dissemination for the report.” [Documented, [2/4/2021](#)]

The Debunked Data From Western Energy Alliance’s Ad Campaign Was Amplified By Local And National News Outlets. “Now, the Western Energy Alliance is spending thousands more to amplify the warnings in an ad campaign against Biden’s climate policies. The numbers have been cited dozens of times in local and national newspapers, including in the New York Times in a reference to Wyoming officials’ projections. The data has become core to Republican messaging opposing Biden’s climate plans even as critics suggest the study might exaggerate economic impacts by as much as 85%. The author even appeared at a meeting of the Congressional Western Caucus in February, alongside Cheney.” [The Guardian, [3/9/2021](#)]

President Of The Western Energy Alliance Kathleen Sgamma Released A Statement The Day Before Haaland’s Hearings Began, Saying That Haaland Has Shown “Hostility” To The Oil And Gas Industry. “Kathleen Sgamma, president of the Western Energy Alliance, said in a statement ahead of the confirmation hearing: ‘Rep. Deb Haaland has shown hostility to the very oil and natural gas development that sustains the state and district she represents. If confirmed as Interior Secretary, she’ll oversee about a quarter of American’s energy production. If she cannot rise to that responsibility, which includes honoring a fiduciary trust to energy-producing tribes, she will seriously put all Americans at risk... However, we hope Rep. Haaland will approach another vital aspect of her presumptive new role without the hostility she has displayed to it in the past.’” [Western Energy Alliance, [2/22/2021](#)]

American Energy Alliance (AEA) Released A List Of “Top 10 Questions For DOI Nominee Deb Haaland” The Day Before Her Hearing, Calling Her A “Radical Choice.”

American Energy Alliance President Thomas Pyle: “Americans Should Be Very Concerned About President Biden’s Radical Choice For The Department Of The Interior.” “AEA President Thomas Pyle issued the following statement ahead of the hearing: ‘Americans should be very concerned about President Biden’s radical choice for the Department of the Interior.’” [American Energy Alliance, [2/22/2021](#)]

AEA President Thomas Pyle Made A Baseless Claim That Haaland Has Made “Disparaging Comments” About Workers In The Oil And Natural Gas Industry. “Representative Haaland has made disparaging comments not only about domestic oil and natural gas production, but also about the workers themselves.” [American Energy Alliance, [2/22/2021](#)]

AEA President Thomas Pyle Patronized Haaland For Opposing Fracking And The Construction Of New Pipelines, Saying “She Should Know Better.” “She has made clear her opposition to the technology of fracking and the construction of new pipelines. As a representative from New Mexico, she should know better. Her state depends on oil and gas production on federal lands to support schools, build roads, and support first responders. She is simply the wrong choice for the Department of Interior.” [American Energy Alliance, [2/22/2021](#)]

AEA's "Top 10 Questions For DOI Nominee Deb Haaland" Includes A Ridiculous And Patronizing Question About What Energy Source To Rely On "When The Wind Is Now Blowing, Or The Sun Is Not Shining." "What is your definition of 'clean' energy? Because 100% renewable energy is not physically possible, which fuel source – nuclear, coal, or natural gas – is your preferred back-up fuel to support a stable electrical grid for times when the wind is not blowing, or the sun is not shining?" [American Energy Alliance, [2/22/2021](#)]

AEA's Statement Cites Debunked Data From A Study Funded By The Western Energy Alliance, Which Put Out Its Own A Fearmongering Statement About Haaland's Nomination Ahead Of Her Hearings. "Furthermore, the Wyoming Energy Authority estimates that the West would lose \$670 billion over twenty years if President Biden's 60-day moratorium on new oil-and-gas leases were converted to a ban on oil and gas development on federal lands. What would your plan be to replace these jobs and revenue in New Mexico and across other Western states?" [American Energy Alliance, [2/22/2021](#)]

AEA Implied That Haaland Should Accept Blame For The Deaths Resulting From The February 2021 Cold Snap. "A recent cold snap in Texas, which neighbors your home state of New Mexico, exposed an over-reliance on intermittent renewable energy sources that cannot deliver when it's needed the most. Half of the wind turbines froze, causing wind's share of electricity to plunge to 8% from 42%. As a result, power prices in the wholesale market spiked, and millions of Texans lost power and at least twenty-three have died. Is there anything you'd like to say to these Texans and their families?" [American Energy Alliance, [2/22/2021](#)]

Republicans Attempted To Cast Haaland As "Radical," And Some Even Tried To Block Her Nomination

In The Weeks Leading Up To Haaland's Hearing, Republicans Attempted To Cast Haaland As "Radical" And "Extreme," And Some Even Tried To Block Her Nomination

Republican Attacked Haaland Immediately Following The News Of Her Nomination, Characterizing Her With Terms Considered Racist And Sexist Dog Whistles, Including "Radical" And "Extreme."

Sen. Steve Daines (R-MT) Claimed Interior Secretary Nominee Deb Haaland's "Radical" Views Would Hurt Montana And Its "Way Of Life," And That He Would Block Her Confirmation "Unless My Concerns Are Addressed." "U.S. Senator Steve Daines issued the following statement after meeting with President Biden's nominee to head the Department of the Interior, Representative Deb Haaland: 'After our conversation, I'm deeply concerned with the Congresswoman's support on several radical issues that will hurt Montana, our way of life, our jobs and rural America, including her support for the Green New Deal and President Biden's oil and gas moratorium, as well as her opposition to the Keystone XL pipeline. Unless my concerns are addressed, I will block her confirmation.'" [Sen. Steve Daines Press Release, [2/5/21](#)]

Sen. Daines' Communications Director Called Haaland A "Diehard, Far-Left Ideologue" Whose "Radical" Record Is "Out Of Touch With Montanans." "'Rep. Haaland's record speaks for itself. She is a diehard, far-left ideologue. Her radical, hostile record on energy, wildlife management and land management is out of touch with Montanans,' said Katie Schoettler, Daines' communications director." [Billings Gazette, [2/22/2021](#)]

The Billings Gazette Editorial Board Called Daines' Use Of "Radical" A Dog Whistle Referencing Haaland's Tribal Status And Gender. "We understand Daines' concerns, and realize they are shared by many who support continued oil and gas extraction on federal lands. But the stridency of his opposition, even before the hearing, gives us pause. We wonder, for instance, if Daines' former Senate colleague, Tom Udall of New Mexico, had been nominated instead, if we would have heard the same level of sharp opposition. Udall favors the Green New Deal. He opposes the Keystone XL Pipeline. Would Daines have denounced him as a

'radical?' We doubt it. We believe the vituperative nature of much of the GOP criticism is a dog-whistle reserved for a candidate of Haaland's tribal status — and gender." [Billings Gazette, [2/21/2021](#)]

Sen. John Barrasso (R-WY) Announced That He Would Oppose Haaland's Nomination, Calling Her Views "Radical." "Sen. John Barrasso (Wyo.), the top Republican on the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, joined the mudslinging Monday, telling E&E News that Haaland's 'radical views are squarely at odds with the responsible management of our nation's energy resources.'" [HuffPost, [2/8/2021](#)]

Other Native American Lawmakers Said That Republicans' Jump To Attack Haaland Even Before Her Hearings Began Exemplifies The Underlying Stereotyping And Disparaging Treatment That Native Americans In Government Are Subjected To. "But supporters of Haaland, who would be the nation's first Native American to serve in a presidential Cabinet, say they see a familiar pattern in the Republicans' rhetoric and their unusual move to voice their opposition even before her nomination hearing was scheduled. They say she's facing a level of criticism above and beyond the normal fiery Washington political rhetoric." [Politico, [2/22/2021](#)]

Republicans' Use Of "Radical" And "Extremist" To Describe Haaland Mirrors Trump's Previous Attacks On Other Women Of Color In Congress. "President Trump early Monday ramped up his online attacks on a group of progressive Democratic congresswomen, asking when they will apologize to the U.S. 'When will the Radical Left Congresswomen apologize to our Country, the people of Israel and even to the Office of the President, for the foul language they have used, and the terrible things they have said,' he tweeted." [The Hill, [7/15/2019](#)]

Some Republican Senators And Representatives Tried To Block Haaland's Nomination Weeks Before Her Confirmation Hearings Were Even Held.

Sen. Steve Daines (R-MT) Announced Weeks Before Haaland's Hearings That He Would Try To Block Her Nomination, Calling Her Support For The Green New Deal And Opposition To The Keystone XL Pipeline "Radical." "Sen. Steve Daines (R-Mont.) announced his opposition Friday after a conversation with Haaland, who would be the first Native American to serve as the top steward of America's public lands and waters. Montana's junior senator signaled he would not only vote against her confirmation but attempt to block her nomination from advancing. 'I'm deeply concerned with the Congresswoman's support on several radical issues that will hurt Montana, our way of life, our jobs and rural America, including her support for the Green New Deal and President Biden's oil and gas moratorium, as well as her opposition to the Keystone XL pipeline,' Daines said in a statement Friday. 'I'm not convinced the Congresswoman can divorce her radical views and represent what's best for Montana and all stakeholders in the West. Unless my concerns are addressed, I will block her confirmation.'" [Mother Jones, [2/9/2021](#)]

Weeks Before Haaland's Hearings, Sen. Cynthia Lummis (R-WY) Said She Was Planning On "Not Only Opposing Her, But Possibly Putting A Hold On Her Nomination." "Her position on those issues is very contrary to Wyoming's best interests and, quite frankly, New Mexico's best interests," Lummis said. "So we are looking at not only opposing her, but possibly putting a hold on her nomination and others at the Department of Interior until we get a chance to talk to the president, and those in the White House about our concerns with their extraordinary negative impact on public land states." [Billings Gazette, [2/9/2021](#)]

Rep. Pete Stauber (R-MN) Rallied 14 Other Republican Representatives To Ask Biden To Revoke Haaland's Nomination, Calling Her A "Direct Threat" To Workers For Her Support Of Conservation And

Policies. “We write today urging the withdrawal of the nomination of Representative Deb Haaland (D-NM) as Secretary of the Interior. Nominating Representative Haaland is a direct threat to working men and women and a rejection of responsible development of America’s natural resources.” [Congressman Pete Stauber, [1/26/2021](#)]

- **Rep. Stauber’s Native American Constituents Said That Stauber Showed His Loyalty To Industry Groups Over His Constituents By Attempting To Block Haaland’s Historic Nomination.** “Rep. Pete Stauber, R-Minn., who sits on the House’s subcommittee on Indigenous Peoples, has been asking fellow lawmakers to join him in urging Biden’s transition team to withdraw Haaland’s nomination. Now all five tribes in Stauber’s congressional district are accusing him of blindsiding them and appeasing big industrial interests at their expense. ‘This historic nomination is more important to us and all of Indian country than any other Cabinet nomination in recent history,’ leaders of the five tribes wrote in a letter dated Jan. 14 and reviewed by NBC News. ‘Your opposition to the first and only American Indian ever nominated to a Cabinet position is likely to reverberate across Indian country.’ The letter was signed by the chairs of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, Bois Forte Band of Chippewa, Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, and Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe.” [NBC News, [1/18/2021](#)]

ATTACKS AGAINST HAALAND DURING HEARINGS

Haaland Faced Two Days Of Hostile Questioning, During Which Republicans Tried To Portray Her As A “Radical” Nominee

Haaland’s Hearing “Resembled A Cross-Examination At Times,” With Republicans Returning To The Same Talking Points About Haaland Being Too “Radical” For The Position. “Haaland faced intense scrutiny from both Republicans and Democrats over her record this week. Senate hearings for Biden’s other nominees so far, including Pete Buttigieg and Janet Yellen, have largely sounded like what they are: job interviews. Haaland’s hearing resembled a cross-examination at times. Republicans kept circling back to one central argument: Haaland was too ‘radical’ to lead the Department of the Interior. Senators also said she was ‘extreme,’ noted that they were ‘troubled’ and ‘concerned’ about her nomination, and said her views will hurt an American ‘way of life.’” [Grist, [2/25/2021](#)]

Ranking Member John Barrasso (R-WY) Said he Was “Troubled By Many Of Representative Haaland’s Views,” Which He Characterized As “Radical.” “John Barrasso of Wyoming, the ranking Republican on the committee, said he was ‘troubled by many of Representative Haaland’s views,’ which he characterized as ‘radical.’ ‘We shouldn’t undermine our energy production and we shouldn’t hurt our own economy,’ he said in an opening statement. ‘Representative Haaland’s positions are squarely at odds with the mission of the Department of [the] Interior.’” [The Guardian, [2/26/2021](#)]

Sen. Steve Daines (R-MT) Said That Haaland’s “Ideology” Will “Perpetuate More Divisiveness” And “Will Certainly Harm Montana’s Economy.” “Republican Sen. Steve Daines of Montana said at the hearing that he is ‘concerned’ about proceeding with the nomination. ‘The track record, the ideology in the past, I think, will perpetuate more divisiveness and will certainly harm Montana’s economy. That’s why I have some concerns,’ he said.” [CNN, [2/23/2021](#)]

Sen. John Kennedy (R-LA) Called Haaland A “Neo-Socialist, Left-Of-Lenin Whack Job” After Her Hearings, Saying In His Apology That He Should Have Gone With The “More Neutral” Term “Extremist” Instead. “Sen. John Kennedy apologized on Thursday for calling President Joe Biden’s Interior Department nominee, Deb Haaland, a ‘whack job.’ The Louisiana Republican said he regretted the remark about Haaland, explaining that he was searching for another word before calling her ‘a neo-socialist, left-of-Lenin whack job.’ ‘I apologize. I was searching for a word for extremist, which I think is more neutral,’ Kennedy said. ‘And I should have said extremist. I never should have said whack job.’” [Politico, [2/25/2021](#)]

Despite Republicans Framing Her Views As Extreme, Haaland Has One Of The Strongest Bipartisan Records Among New Congressmembers.

Contrary To The Republican Committee Members' Portrayal Of Haaland As "Radical," Haaland Has Been Notably Successful In Working With Republican Congressmembers On Bipartisan Issues. "Haaland has strong relationships with Republicans and a record of success working across the aisle. She worked with Senators on both sides of the aisle to deliver COVID-19 funding for Tribes. Build meaningful relationships with Republican House and Senate members to seek common ground on outdoor recreation, missing and murdered Indigenous women, and military housing protections." [Climate Power, [2/23/2021](#)]

In 2019, Haaland Introduced More Bills With Bipartisan Support Than Any Other House Freshmen. "Conservatives have portrayed Haaland as a divisive partisan, but in 2019, she introduced the most bills with bipartisan support of all House freshmen. On Tuesday, Republican Rep. Don Young of Alaska — a conservative congressman from an oil state — introduced Haaland as a strong nominee and friend who works across the aisle and whose perspective as a native person is needed at Interior." [Washington Post, [2/25/2021](#)]

Republicans Berated Haaland At Times And Made Patronizing Accusations That She Doesn't "Respect Science," While They Themselves Deny Climate Science

Utah Sen. Mike Lee's Questioning Of Haaland Was Referred To As A "Lecture" By The Salt Lake Tribune. "Lee's queries continued, delivered more in the form of a lecture as he revisited the designations by Democratic presidents of Bears Ears and Grand Staircase, at 1.3 million and 1.9 million acres, respectively. Both were established under a 1906 law that empowers presidents to designate monuments to protect antiquities and other objects of historic and scientific interest." [Salt Lake Tribune, [2/23/2021](#)]

Sen. Barrasso Shouted Over Haaland At One Point, Making A Bizarre Accusation About Her "Wanting To Legalize Drugs To Replace Tax Revenue From Oil And Gas." "Wyoming Sen. John Barrasso, the senior Republican on the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, shouted over Haaland, accusing the congresswoman of wanting to legalize drugs to replace tax revenue from oil and gas. (Haaland backed legalizing and taxing cannabis as a congresswoman, but never advocated doing so instead of taxing fossil fuels.)" [Washington Post, [2/25/2021](#)]

Sens. Steve Daines, John Barrasso, And Bill Cassidy—Who Have All Denied Humans' Role In Climate Change—Tried To Portray Haaland As Someone Who Doesn't "Respect Science." "Interior Secretary nominee Deb Haaland on Wednesday wrapped up two days of Senate confirmation hearings in which Republicans seemed hellbent on casting her as anti-science — a bizarre tactic given that she has no such record. But they do. Republican Sens. John Barrasso (Wyo.), Steve Daines (Mont.) and Bill Cassidy (La.) all pressed Haaland on whether she would follow science as interior secretary. They referenced Haaland's Oct. 7 tweet claiming that Republicans don't believe in science and appeared to take offense to it... But all three of these senators — medical degree or not — have records of dismissing basic science. In a stunning 2015 Senate vote, Barrasso, Daines and Cassidy joined most of their Republican colleagues in rejecting the idea that human activity is 'a significant contributor' to climate change, a conclusion on which scientists overwhelmingly agree." [HuffPost, [2/24/2021](#)]

Sen. Bill Cassidy (R-LA) Took Every Opportunity To Throw Haaland's Previous Comments About Republicans Not Believing In Science Back In Her Face, Asking Her "Will Your Department Be Guided By A Prejudice Against Fossil Fuel Or Will It Be Guided By Science?" "'I'm just hoping that Democrats pay attention to the science,' Cassidy said to Haaland during her hearing. 'Is this administration and will your department be guided by a prejudice against fossil fuel or will it be guided by science?'" [HuffPost, [2/24/2021](#)]

Sen. Cassidy—Who Has Denied The Causes And Effects Of Climate Change And Defended Trump's False Claim About Disinfectants Treating COVID-19—Went On To Accuse The Biden Administration Of Rejecting Science, Claiming "Clearly The Biden Administration Is Not Guided By Science, And Republicans Are Guided By Science." "Cassidy cited Haaland's position 'as to how Republicans view science' when asking about President Joe Biden's decision to halt construction on the Keystone XL pipeline. 'Is your department going to be guided by science or by something other than science?' asked the Louisiana Republican. 'Because, clearly, the Biden administration was not guided by science. And Republicans, by the way, are guided by science.'" [HuffPost, [2/24/2021](#)]

- **Cassidy Has Refused To Answer Questions About Whether Human Activity Is A Significant Contributor To Climate Change.** "After his first public meeting, I asked Sen. Cassidy if he thought humans played a role in climate change. Instead of answering my question, he spoke about the unfair global marketplace resulting from China not having to abide by the same rules as other countries, insisting China 'makes almost no effort' to limit air pollutants, specifically sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides, from coal power plants... Each time I asked about climate change, Sen. Cassidy answered instead with a reference to sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides as if they were the top greenhouse gases contributing to current climate change rather than carbon dioxide and methane." [DeSmog, [2/24/2017](#)]
- **Cassidy Said In A 2014 Debate That "Global Temperatures Have Not Risen In 15 Years."** "Climate change split the top two candidates in the Louisiana Senate race in a state that's home to a vibrant fossil fuel industry, but also one of the most vulnerable to rising sea levels and intense storms linked to a warming planet. GOP Rep. Bill Cassidy, who is challenging the incumbent Democratic Sen. Mary Landrieu, claimed during a Tuesday debate in Shreveport, La., that, 'global temperatures have not risen in 15 years.'" [Washington Examiner, [10/14/2014](#)]
- **Cassidy Defended Trump's Dangerous Claim That Ingesting Disinfectants Can Treat COVID-19, Obfuscating Trump Of Any Responsibility.** "Cassidy, a physician, made no effort to publicly repudiate Trump's dangerous medical advice that people could treat the coronavirus by ingesting disinfectants. Trump's comments led to upticks in calls to poison centers and accidental poisonings. 'The president speaks in such a way, people are not going to inject themselves,' Cassidy said in an April 2020 interview on CNN's 'Inside Politics,' repeatedly refusing to call out Trump's claims. 'When I hear this kind of conversation around that, I think to myself, we should be talking about, how do we use data to guide where we can reopen the economy, not about what the President said on Lysol because really no one is going to inject themselves with Lysol.'" [HuffPost, [2/24/2021](#)]
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Sen. John Hoeven (R-ND) Criticized Haaland For Her Past Environmental Advocacy Relating To The Dakota Access Pipeline, Which Risks Leaking Dirty Oil Into The Water Supply And Sacred Lands Of

The Standing Rock Sioux Tribe. “The North Dakota senator John Hoeven criticized Haaland for having joined fellow Native Americans to protest the Dakota Access Pipeline, which risks leaking dirty oil into the water supply and sacred lands of the Standing Rock Sioux tribe, in his state. Hoeven said he was concerned for his state’s economy but failed to disclose his own substantial investments in the oil and gas industry, including in North Dakota.” [The Guardian, [2/26/2021](#)]

Sen. James Risch (R-ID) Repeatedly Badgered Haaland About Her Stance On The Keystone XL Pipeline After She Had Answered The Questions Several Times Over. “GOP lawmakers on the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee continued Wednesday to hammer the New Mexico Democrat on her stances against the oil and natural gas industry. One of the first two Native American women elected to Congress, Haaland supported protesters who stood against construction of the Dakota Access pipeline and has advocated for a greater focus on renewable energy... Following up, Idaho Senator James Risch asked Haaland more than three times if she supported the president’s decision to halt the project. She deferred to Biden’s presidential authority.” [Missoula Current, [2/24/2021](#)]

Sen. Mike Lee Asked Haaland Whether People Who Have “Economic Interest In The Land” Should Have Been Consulted Before Bear Ears Was Designated As A National Monument, Disregarding The Fact That “The Nominee’s Pueblo Relatives Are Among The Tribes That Consider Bears Ears A Sacred Place.” “Utah Sen. Mike Lee expressed his dissatisfaction with the designation of Bears Ears as a national monument, asking whether Haaland thought it was ‘appropriate for stakeholders, people who have some sort of economic interest in the land or some sort of connection to the land ... to be involved in the national monument designation process.’ Lee was apparently unaware that the nominee’s Pueblo relatives are among the tribes that consider Bears Ears a sacred place, tracing their connections to the land to time immemorial.” [Washington Post, [2/25/2021](#)]

While Questioning Haaland On The Designation Of Bears Ears As A National Monument, Sen. Lee Aggressively Cut Her Off While She Was Giving A Compliment To The State Of Utah. “Haaland responded by talking up the natural and cultural wonders for which Utah is famous. ‘I’m a little jealous that you’re from Utah and I’m from New Mexico because I know you have so much beautiful land there and a lot of history,’ she said. ‘I’ve been to Bears Ears and the Pueblo Indians’ ancestral homeland is there. And I realize it covers a very wide space.’ Lee cut her off, saying he ‘appreciated’ her compliment to Utah. ‘But the monument designation doesn’t make them more beautiful,’ he said. ‘It does tend to make the communities that don’t support them impoverished. And that’s what concerns me.’” [Salt Lake Tribune, [2/23/2021](#)]

Republican Senators Grilled Haaland On President Biden’s Executive Action Pausing New Leases For Oil And Gas Drilling, Parroting Industry Groups’ Complaints And Fearmongering

Republicans Cited Findings From An American Petroleum Institute (API) Study That Has Been Criticized For Severely Inflating The Economic Impacts Of Restricting Leases For Oil And Gas Developments

The American Petroleum Institute Released A Study In September 2020 Warning That A Ban On New Federal Leases For Drilling Would Devastate The U.S. Economy. “The American Petroleum Institute (API) today released a new analysis warning of negative consequences from a proposed ban on federal leasing on natural gas and oil development on public lands and waters. The analysis projects that a ban would shift the U.S. to foreign energy sources, cost nearly one million American jobs, increase CO₂ emissions and reduce revenue that funds education and key conservation programs.” [American Petroleum Institute, [9/9/2020](#)]

API’s Study Has Been Criticized For Severely Exaggerating The Economic Impacts Of Putting Restrictions On Drilling, Including “Claiming That More People Would Lose Their Jobs Than The

Industry Actually Employs.” “The New Mexico Oil & Gas Association said that restricting drilling ‘risks the loss of more than 60,000 jobs and \$800 million’ in tax revenue for the state. The American Petroleum Institute (API) went further, saying a ban on new leases risks ‘hundreds of thousands of jobs and billions in government revenue.’ The oil and gas industry only directly employs a little over 160,000 people, according to the U.S. Labor Department. API is claiming that more people would lose their jobs than the industry actually employs. Even accounting for ripple effects on related industries, it is a staggering claim.” [DeSmog, [1/27/2021](#)]

Republican Senators Cited API’s Study As They Questioned Haaland On Her Past Statements About Fracking And The Biden Administration’s Climate Agenda. “Republican senators cited a study commissioned by the biggest oil and gas trade association in the US in their criticisms of Deb Haaland, Joe Biden’s nominee to lead the Department of the Interior, during a confirmation hearing last week. Republicans on the Senate energy and natural resources committee referenced the study, which has been widely criticized by conservationists, as they grilled Haaland, a Democratic US representative from New Mexico, on her past statements about energy issues and the Biden administration’s climate plans.” [The Guardian, [3/4/2021](#)]

Sen. John Barrasso (R-WY) Cited The American Petroleum Institute’s Unfounded Claims About Restrictions On Drilling Costing 1 Million Jobs And Putting A Burden On States’ Education Systems. “At other times during the hearings, Barrasso referenced the API study’s job loss numbers for New Mexico and Wyoming and its national estimate of nearly 1m lost jobs. The senator claimed that lost revenue from oil and gas production on federal lands would cost states’ education systems, a claim that API promoted in its ‘EnergyCitizens’ advertising campaign last fall.” [The Guardian, [3/4/2021](#)]

Sen. John Barrasso (R-WY) Referenced The API Study Three Times During The Hearings, And Sen. Cindy Hyde-Smith (R-MS) Referenced The Study Once. “John Barrasso of Wyoming, the ranking member on the committee and a top Senate recipient of oil and gas contributions, cited the institute’s September 2020 study three times during the hearings, and Cindy Hyde-Smith of Mississippi referenced it once.” [The Guardian, [3/4/2021](#)]

Cindy Hyde-Smith (R-MS), Who Has Received Hundreds Of Thousands In Campaign Contributions From The Oil And Gas Industry, Cited API’s Unfounded Projections Of Economic Devastation In Mississippi. “Hyde-Smith, whose campaigns have received \$357,000 from oil and gas PACs and employees, cited the API report’s claim of 14,000 job losses over two years and potentially \$32m in lost revenue in her state, Mississippi. She also listed the study’s projected national 68% decrease in offshore natural gas production by 2030 and a big increase in oil imports.” [The Guardian, [3/4/2021](#)]

Native American Lawmakers And Advocacy Groups Said That Haaland Faced A Much Higher—And More Vicious—Level Of Scrutiny During Her Nomination Process Because Of Prejudice Against Native Americans And Women Of Color

Montana State Sen. Shane Morigeau, Who Is A Member Of The Salish And Kootenai Tribes, Said That As A Woman Of Color And Native American, Haaland Was An Easy Target For Mistreatment. “Being a minority person and being a person of color, it makes you wonder if she would get this treatment if she wasn’t a person of color, if she wasn’t Indian and if she wasn’t a woman,” said Montana state Sen. Shane Morigeau, a Democrat and a member of the Salish and Kootenai tribes, in an interview. ‘She became an easy target because we haven’t gotten to this place in our country where we give — especially women and people of color — a fair shot.’” [Politico, [2/22/2021](#)]

Montana State Rep. And Member Of The Blackfeet Nation Tyson Running Wolf Said Republicans’ Fierce Opposition To Haaland’s Nomination Demonstrated How Native Americans Are Forced To Meet Much Higher Standards To Enter Government. “But multiple Native Americans told POLITICO that the senators’ sharp critiques of Haaland, before she’s had a chance to address their concerns, reminds them of

the stereotyping and dismissiveness that tribes have long experienced in dealings with the U.S. government. Democratic Montana Rep. Tyson Running Wolf, a member of the Blackfeet Nation, called the Republican opposition a 'political ploy' familiar to Native Americans who have entered politics, where there exists a 'preconceived notion from others that you're 25-30 percent dumber.' 'It's wrong that they haven't given her the chance,' Running Wolf said." [Politico, [2/22/2021](#)]

Some Native American And Other Civil Rights Groups Criticized The "Radical" Label As a Racist Dog Whistle That Referenced Haaland's Tribal Status. "Some Democrats and Native advocates called the frequent description of Haaland as 'radical' a loaded reference to her tribal status. 'That kind of language is sort of a dog whistle for certain folks that see somebody who is an Indigenous woman potentially being in a position of power,' said Ta'jin Perez with the group Western Native Voice. In an op-ed in USA Today, former Sens. Mark and Tom Udall said Haaland's record 'is in line with mainstream conservation priorities. Thus, the exceptional criticism of Rep. Haaland and the threatened holds on her nomination must be motivated by something other than her record.'" [Indian Country Today, [2/22/21](#)]

Leader Of Native Advocacy Group IllumiNative Crystal Echo Hawk Described The "Radical" And "Extremist" Labels Used By Republican Senators As Dog Whistles For People Of Color. "Women, particularly women of color—we have struggled against this forever—that we're held to a higher standard. We're asked to work harder, show our credentials more and it never seems to be quite enough,' said Crystal Echo Hawk, founder and executive director of IllumiNative, noting the negative narrative pushed by critics about Haaland from the time that she was nominated... Pointing to terms used to describe Haaland like 'radical' or 'extremist,' Echo Hawk added that 'those become dog whistles for people of color.'" [CNN, [2/27/2021](#)]

Leader Of Latino Civil Rights Group UnidosUs Janet Murguía Said That Republican Senators Used "Coded Language" In Their Questioning Of Deb Haaland and Xavier Becerra, A Latino Man Who Is Also A Biden Nominee. "Janet Murguía, president and CEO of UnidosUS, said she was troubled by what she views as coded language questioning whether nominees like Becerra or Haaland have the right experience, when she views their credentials as impeccable. 'We're just seeing a lot of effort here to target certain nominees who happen to be women, people of color or the daughters or sons of immigrants -- and it just smacks of a different standard and makes you question whether there is something deeper going on here,' Murguía said." [CNN, [2/27/2021](#)]

After Haaland's Hearings, Sen. Steve Daines Announced That He Would Try To Block Her Nomination, Soliciting Support From "Montana Leaders" Who Parroted Daines' Characterization Of Haaland As A "Radical" Who Threatens The State's "Way Of Life."

The Day After Haaland's Hearings, Sen. Steve Daines Announced That He Would Try To Block Her Nomination And Her "Ideological Agenda That Threatens The Montana Way Of Life." "U.S. Senator Steve Daines today announced he will oppose the nomination of President Biden's Interior Secretary Nominee Deb Haaland, and will work to block and defeat it. The announcement follows a two-day U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources hearing where Haaland's ideological agenda that threatens the Montana way of life took center stage." [Sen. Steve Daines, [2/24/2021](#)]

Sen. Daines Highlighted Letters From "Montana Leaders" Thanking Him For Opposing Haaland's Nomination And Drawing Attention To Haaland's "Radical Views And Ideological Agenda." "This week, several Montana leaders across the state have sent statements in opposition to President Biden's Interior Secretary nominee Rep. Deb Haaland. Montana leaders have thanked Daines for his work highlighting concerns about Haaland's radical views and ideological agenda that will impact the Montana way of life." [Sen. Steve Daines, [2/24/2021](#)]

In A Statement Featured On Sen. Daines' Website, Montana Coal Council's Executive Director Said That She Opposed Haaland's Nomination Because Montana Is "Dependent On Fossil Fuels." "Rep.

Haaland served as Vice Chair for the Congressional Progressive Caucus, calling for the elimination of fossil fuels. It would be detrimental to not only communities that mine coal, but for the Treasure State, as we are dependent on fossil fuels to produce everyday necessities and jobs for our hard-working Montanans.” [Sen. Steve Daines, [2/24/2021](#)]

Montana Petroleum Association’s Executive Director Accused Haaland Of “Participating With Radical Anti-Resource Groups.” “Her participation with radical anti-resource groups as well as a partner in the ‘Green New Deal’ is not consistent with developing economic freedom for America’s Indian Nations or the country as a whole.” [Sen. Steve Daines, [2/24/2021](#)]

Valley County Board Of Commissioners: Haaland’s Record “Shows An Alarming Bias Against The Culture, Values, And Economy Embraced By Most Montanans.” “The Valley County Commissioners are very grateful for your opposition to the appointment of Deb Haaland to Secretary of Interior. Her record shows an alarming bias against the culture, values, and economy embraced by most Montanans.” [Sen. Steve Daines, [2/24/2021](#)]

Ravalli County Commissioner: Haaland “Does Not Share Our Western Values Or Vision” And The Policies She Has Supported Are “Hostile To The Western Way-Of-Life.” “Representative Haaland does NOT share our western values or vision. She has a clear history and long record of supporting issues hostile to the Western way-of-life and economic prosperity.” [Sen. Steve Daines, [2/24/2021](#)]

President of Montana Snowmobile Association: Haaland “Does Not Represent The Ideals And Values Of Our Western Way Of Life.” “Representative Haaland does not represent the ideals and values of our Western way of life, and will be a serious detriment to our ongoing use of public lands and winter recreation. We live in these great western states to enjoy and protect our public lands, and we don’t need the far left telling us how to live and manage our back yards or recreation areas. We strongly oppose Representative Haaland’s appointment.” [Sen. Steve Daines, [2/24/2021](#)]

Sen. Steve Daines (R-MT) And Sen. Cynthia Lummis (R-WY) Delayed Haaland’s Confirmation Vote By Using Procedural Rules To Force A Debate On Her Nomination After Her Hearings Concluded. “Two GOP Senators have put holds on Rep. Deb Haaland’s nomination to be Interior Secretary, putting up a procedural hurdle that will delay the New Mexico Democrat’s final confirmation vote. Sens. Steve Daines (Mont.) and Cynthia Lummis (Wyo.) said they will force debate on Haaland’s nomination, which would last for 30 hours.” [The Hill, [3/9/2021](#)]

Haaland Was Ultimately Confirmed As Interior Secretary, 51-40. “Deb Haaland, a member of New Mexico’s Laguna Pueblo, has become the first Native American Cabinet secretary in U.S. history. The Senate voted 51-40 Monday to confirm the Democratic congresswoman to lead the Interior Department, an agency that will play a crucial role in the Biden administration’s ambitious efforts to combat climate change and conserve nature.” [NPR, [3/15/21](#)]

Daines’ And Other Conservatives’ Claim That Haaland Does Not Share Or Represent “Western Values” Is A Racist Dog Whistle Referencing Haaland’s Tribal Status.

Indigenous And Environmental Advocates Rebuked Daines’ Portrayal Of Haaland As An Outsider, Stating That The 35th Generation New Mexican “Knows The West.” “Haaland knows how the West lives. Throughout her career, Haaland has spent time with families in rural, agricultural, and ranching communities – including her own. Her sister and family are cattle ranchers, and she has participated in their work. She understands the business and the challenges facing real people. Haaland’s deep relationships with Tribes, stakeholders, outdoor recreation groups, hunters, anglers, and conservation groups working on policy issues within the jurisdiction of the Interior, including the maintenance backlog, the outdoor recreation economy, and Tribal consultation is an undeniable asset for the agency.” [Climate Power, [2/23/2021](#)]

“Haaland’s Nomination And Her Identity As A Native American Woman Threatens The Status Quo In Washington D.C.” “Julia Bernal, an enrolled member of the Sandia Pueblo tribe and environmental justice

director at the Pueblo Action Alliance, a Pueblo community organization in New Mexico, told Grist that Haaland's nomination and her identity as a Native American woman threatens the status quo in Washington D.C. 'People in general are afraid of change,' she said." [Grist, [2/25/2021](#)]

Indigenous And Environmental Advocates Noted How Haaland's Deep Relationships With Tribes, Agricultural Communities, And Conservation Groups Make Her An Asset To The Interior Department.

"Haaland knows how the West lives. Throughout her career, Haaland has spent time with families in rural, agricultural, and ranching communities – including her own. Her sister and family are cattle ranchers, and she has participated in their work. She understands the business and the challenges facing real people. Haaland's deep relationships with Tribes, stakeholders, outdoor recreation groups, hunters, anglers, and conservation groups working on policy issues within the jurisdiction of the Interior, including the maintenance backlog, the outdoor recreation economy, and Tribal consultation is an undeniable asset for the agency." [Climate Power, [2/23/2021](#)]

OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY FUNDING

Republican Senators On Committee Overseeing Confirmation Of Biden's Interior Secretary Took Nearly \$8.8M From Oil And Gas Industry

Republican Members Of Senate Energy And Natural Resources Committee Took Nearly \$8.8M From Oil And Gas Industry, Including Over \$1.4M During 2020 Cycle.

10 GOP Members Of Senate Energy And Natural Resources (ENR) Committee Collectively Took Nearly \$8.8 Million From Oil And Gas Industry, Including Over \$1.4 Million During 2020 Cycle.

SENATOR	2020 CYCLE CONTRIBUTIONS FROM OIL & GAS	CAREER CONTRIBUTIONS FROM OIL & GAS
Bill Cassidy	\$306,127	\$1,681,447
Lisa Murkowski	\$46,250	\$1,530,644
James Lankford	\$19,400	\$1,266,270
Steve Daines	\$549,567	\$1,179,260
John Barrasso	\$68,137	\$1,169,103
John Hoeven	\$20,367	\$690,170
Mike Lee	\$8,755	\$366,400
Cindy Hyde-Smith	\$155,988	\$357,439
Jim Risch	\$100,097	\$326,547
Roger Marshall	\$162,151	\$209,233
TOTAL	\$1,436,839	\$8,776,513

NOTE: "2020 cycle" is defined as calendar years 2019 and 2020.

[Center for Responsive Politics, Oil & Gas, 2020 cycle, accessed [2/16/21](#);
Center for Responsive Politics, Oil & Gas, All cycles, accessed [2/16/21](#)]

The Industry Group That Republican Senators Cited During Haaland's Hearings Has Given Millions Of Dollars To The PACs That Helped Elect Those Senators

In 2020, The American Petroleum Institute (API) Gave \$5M To The Senate Leadership Fund, Which Spent Tens Of Millions To Elect Sen. Steve Daines (R-MT) And Sen. Roger Marshall (R-KS). "API has been generous to Republican candidates, including those on the energy committee. In 2020, API gave \$5m to the Senate Leadership Fund, which spent tens of millions of dollars to elect the Republican committee

members Steve Daines of Wyoming (\$24.7m), who pledged to block Haaland's nomination, and Roger Marshall of Kansas (\$17.5m)." [The Guardian, [3/4/2021](#)]

During The 2020 Election Cycle, API's PAC Donated \$19,500 To Republican Senators On The Energy Committee. "The Super Pac also spent money to help Collins and attack the Democratic committee members John Hickenlooper of Colorado and Mark Kelly of Arizona. In 2018, Barrasso's most recent election year, API's Pac donated \$7,500 to his campaign. In 2020, Hyde-Smith's most recent election, it gave \$2,000 to her campaign. In that cycle, the Pac contributed \$19,500 to senators on the energy committee, all of them Republicans." [The Guardian, [3/4/2021](#)]

API's PAC Donated Thousands Of Dollars To Sens. John Barrasso And Cindy Hyde-Smith Between 2018 And 2020. "The Super Pac also spent money to help Collins and attack the Democratic committee members John Hickenlooper of Colorado and Mark Kelly of Arizona. In 2018, Barrasso's most recent election year, API's Pac donated \$7,500 to his campaign. In 2020, Hyde-Smith's most recent election, it gave \$2,000 to her campaign. In that cycle, the Pac contributed \$19,500 to senators on the energy committee, all of them Republicans." [The Guardian, [3/4/2021](#)]

Ranking Member John Barrasso Took Nearly One-Third Of His Total 2020 Oil And Gas Industry PAC Contributions As He Was Poised To Become Chair Of ENR, Then Pledged To Stall Biden Environmental Nominees.

October To December 2020: Expected To Be ENR Committee Chair, Barrasso Took \$19,500 From Oil And Gas PACs, Out Of \$68,137 Total For 2020 Cycle.

2019-2020: Barrasso Took \$68,137 Total From Oil And Gas Industry. [Center for Responsive Politics, Oil & Gas, accessed [2/16/21](#)]

Oct.-Dec. 2020: Barrasso Took \$19,500 From Oil And Gas Industry PACs. [Federal Election Commission, Friends of John Barrasso, Year-End Report, [1/21/21](#)]

Nov. 2020: Barrasso Was Poised To Be Chair Of ENR Committee If Republicans Maintained Senate Control. "Sen. John Barrasso, R-Wyo., said Wednesday he intends to assume the top spot on the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee in the next Congress, a shift with cascading repercussions on energy, environment and transportation issues." [Roll Call, [11/18/20](#)]

- **Roll Call HEADLINE: "Barrasso Stakes Claim To Chair Energy And Natural Resources"** [Roll Call, [11/18/20](#)]
- **"Barrasso Will Remain A Key Player On Public Lands, Energy Research, Carbon Capture And Mining No Matter If He The Committee Chairman Or Its Ranking Member."** [Roll Call, [11/18/20](#)]
- **Barrasso Was Ranking Member Of Environment And Natural Resource Committee.** [U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, Members, accessed [2/12/20](#)]

POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE	DATE OF CONTRIBUTION	CONTRIBUTION TO BARRASSO
Black Hills Corporation PAC	10/9/20	\$2,000
BP North America Employee PAC	10/9/20	\$2,000
Ovintiv USA PAC	10/20/20	\$2,500
PG&E Energy PAC	10/20/20	\$1,000
POWER PAC/American Public Power Assn	10/20/20	\$1,000
Marathon Oil Company Employees PAC/MEPAC	10/30/20	\$1,000
TENASKA Employee PAC	10/30/20	\$1,000
Salt River Project PAC	11/16/20	\$1,000

PG&E Emery PAC	12/6/20	\$5,000
Calpine PAC	12/6/20	\$1,000
Chevron Employees/CEPAC	12/6/20	\$1,000
TransCanada USA Services, Inc. PAC	12/6/20	\$1,000
TOTAL		\$19,500

[Federal Election Commission, Friends of John Barrasso, Year-End Report, [1/21/21](#)]

December 2020: Barrasso Pledged To Obstruct Biden Energy Nominees, Declaring, “If You Want Accountability And Not Just A Rubber Stamp For A Joe Biden Cabinet, You Need To Have People Like Me As Chairman,” And That “These Nominees Are Going To Have To Run The Gauntlet.”

December 2020: Asked If He Would “Promise Swift Confirmation” Of Biden’s Cabinet, Barrasso Said Biden’s Cabinet “Didn’t Sit Really Well In Wyoming.” WALLACE: “Senator, are you going to play the Democrats’ game of delay; what they did to Donald Trump in 2017? Or can you promise swift confirmation of [Biden’s] nominees? And are there any names of the names you’ve heard so far that you consider dead on arrival? BARRASSO: “Well, a couple of things. It looks like the Biden Cabinet would be a third term of the Obama administration, and that didn’t sit really well in Wyoming.” [FOX News, [12/20/20](#)]

- **Barrasso: “If You Want Accountability And Not Just A Rubber Stamp For A Joe Biden Cabinet, You Need To Have People Like Me As Chairman Of The Energy Committee.”** “We have a role to advise and consent on these nominees, which is why the election coming up in Georgia is so critical in the control of the Senate, why I wanna make sure that David Perdue and Kelly Loeffler get elected there. If you want accountability and not just a rubber stamp for a Joe Biden Cabinet, you need to have people like me as chairman of the energy committee.” [FOX News, [12/20/20](#)]
- **Barrasso: “It’s Not Gonna Be A Garden Party If The Republicans Are In The Majority; These Nominees Are Going To Have To Run The Gauntlet.”** “So we’ll have hearings, ask the tough questions, but we are not gonna forget what happened with President Trump’s administration, and the delayed process that went through it. So it’s not gonna be a garden party, if the Republicans are in the majority; these nominees are going to have to run the gauntlet.” [FOX News, [12/20/20](#)]

Senate ENR Committee Member Steve Daines Explicitly Said That He Would Block Haaland For Being Unfriendly To Oil And Gas

Daines Said He Would Block Haaland’s Nomination Unless His Concerns About Her Positions On Green New Deal, Biden’s Oil And Gas Moratorium, And Keystone XL Pipeline Were Addressed.

February 2021: Daines Said He Would Block Haaland’s Confirmation Unless His Demands For Oil And Gas Industry Were Met. “After our conversation, I’m deeply concerned with the Congresswoman’s support on several radical issues that will hurt Montana, our way of life, our jobs and rural America, including her support for the Green New Deal and President Biden’s oil and gas moratorium, as well as her opposition to the Keystone XL pipeline. [...] Unless my concerns are addressed, I will block her confirmation.” [Office of Senator Steve Daines, [2/5/21](#)]

- **Daines: “I’m Deeply Concerned With [Haaland’s] ... Support For The Green New Deal And President Biden’s Oil And Gas Moratorium, As Well As Her Opposition To The Keystone XL Pipeline.”** [Office of Senator Steven Daines, [2/5/21](#)]
- **Daines: “Unless My Concerns Are Addressed, I Will Block Her Confirmation.”** [Office of Senator Steven Daines, [2/5/21](#)]

January 2021: All But One GOP Senator On ENR Committee Co-Sponsored Legislation To Block Biden’s Executive Action Pausing Leases For Oil And Gas Drilling On Federal Land.

9 Of 10 GOP Senators On ENR Committee—Every GOP Member Except Lisa Murkowski—Co-Sponsored Legislation To Block Biden’s Executive Action Pausing New Leases For Oil And Gas Drilling.

January 2021: Senator Cynthia Lummis Introduced A Bill “To Prohibit Any President Of Federal Agency From Blocking Energy Or Mineral Leasing Permits On Federal Lands Without Congressional Scrutiny.” “U.S. Sen. Cynthia Lummis, R-Wyo., introduced a bill to prohibit any president or federal agency from blocking energy or mineral leasing permits on federal lands without congressional scrutiny.” [Center Square, [1/31/21](#)]

- **Proposed Legislation Came After Biden “Issued Over 30 Executive Orders In His First Week In Office,” Including Order “Prohibiting The Issuing Of new Mining And Energy Leasing On Federal Lands.”** “The proposed legislation comes after President Joe Biden issued over 30 executive orders in his first week in office, more than any president in history, the New York Post reports. [...] Biden last week signed an executive order prohibiting the issuing of new mining and energy leasing on federal lands. One day after he took office, the Department of the Interior issued a 60-day suspension of issuing new leases for oil and gas drilling on federal lands.” [Center Square, [1/31/21](#)]
- **Nine GOP Members Of Senate ENR—Every GOP Member Except Lisa Murkowski—Co-Sponsored Lummis’ Bill.** These senators are:
 - John Barrasso
 - Bill Cassidy
 - Steve Daines
 - John Hoeven
 - Cindy Hyde-Smith
 - James Lankford
 - Mike Lee
 - Roger Marshall
 - Jim Risch

[United States Congress, S.76, accessed [2/3/21](#)]

Biden’s Inauguration Day: Daines Announced Bills To Undercut Biden’s Executive Actions Halting Keystone XL Pipeline And Rejoining Paris Accords; Four Other ENR Members Were Original Cosponsors.

January 20, 2021: Senator Steve Daines Introduced Bill To “Authorize The Continued Construction of The Keystone XL Pipeline Following President Biden’s Decision To Revoke The Cross-Border Operation Permit.” “U.S. Senator Steve Daines will introduce legislation to authorize the continued construction of the Keystone XL Pipeline following President Biden’s decision to revoke the cross-border operation permit.” [Office of Steven Daines, [1/20/21](#)]

- **Barrasso, Hoeven, Marshall, And Risch Were Among Original Co-Sponsors.** “Daines will introduce the legislation with Senators Crapo (Idaho), Risch (Idaho), Barrasso (Wyo.), Marshall (Kan.), Moran (Kan.), Inhofe (Okla.), and Hoeven (N.D.). Several other western senators are expected to sign on.” [Office of Senator Steven Daines, [1/20/21](#)]

January 20, 2021: Following Biden’s Announcement That The U.S. Would Rejoin The Paris Climate Accords, Daines Announced Plans To “Introduce A Senate Resolution” Calling On Biden To Submit The Agreement For Senate Consideration. “U.S. Senator Steve Daines today announced plans to introduce

a Senate resolution calling on President Joe Biden to submit the Paris Climate Agreement to the U.S. Senate for advice and consent as required by the Constitution before re-joining the treaty. This follows Biden announcing his intent to re-enter the United States into the Paris Climate Agreement which President Trump withdrew from last year.” [Office of Senator Steven Daines, [1/20/21](#)]

- **Barrasso And Marshall Were Among Original Co-Sponsors.** “Daines will introduce the Senate resolution with Senators Crapo (Idaho), Barrasso (Wyo.), Lummis (Wyo.), Moran (Kan.) and Marshall (Kan.). Several other western senators are expected to sign on.” [Office of Senator Steven Daines, [1/20/21](#)]