GOP Senators Took Nearly $8.8M From Oil And Gas, Then Obstructed Biden’s Interior Secretary Nominee And Environmental Agenda

SUMMARY: As the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources prepares to consider Deb Haaland as Biden’s pick to head the Interior Department, an Accountable.US analysis reveals that 10 GOP committee members took over $1.4 million from the oil and gas industry from 2019 to 2020, then obstructed the president’s Interior Department nominee and environmental agenda. The committee’s GOP members’ career combined oil and gas war chest totals nearly $8.8 million.

Notably, new filings from the Federal Election Commission reveal Ranking Member John Barrasso took nearly $20,000 of his almost $70,000 total 2020 cycle contributions from the industry during the last quarter of 2020, when he was still expected to chair the ENR committee in a Republican-controlled Senate. In December, Barrasso appeared on FOX News, saying, “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.” He continued, “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.”

Senator Steve Daines has also been a leading Biden obstructionist, declaring he would block Biden’s nominee for Interior Secretary unless she met his demands on behalf of the oil and gas industry. On Inauguration Day, Daines announced dual legislation to undercut first-day executive actions on the Keystone XL Pipeline and Paris Climate Accords; four GOP members of the ENR committee were original co-sponsors on at least one of the bills. Overall, all 10 Republican members of the Senate ENR committee have supported measures to block Biden’s climate agenda, introducing at least 34 amendments to undercut Biden’s environmental agenda on everything from the Paris Climate Agreement to permitting to oil leasing.

Nine of 10 GOP senators on the ENR committee also co-sponsored legislation to block Biden’s executive action pausing new leases for oil and gas drilling around the same time at least one industry group, Western Energy Alliance, began litigating against Biden’s policy. Barrasso and Senator Lisa Murkowski were also featured speakers for oil and gas lobbying groups —Independent Petroleum Association of America and National Ocean Industries Association, respectively—during the 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SENATOR</th>
<th>2020 CYCLE CONTRIBUTIONS FROM OIL &amp; GAS</th>
<th>CAREER CONTRIBUTIONS FROM OIL &amp; GAS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bill Cassidy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lisa Murkowski</td>
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<td>James Lankford</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,436,839</strong></td>
<td><strong>$8,776,513</strong></td>
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**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]

Energy And Natural Resources Committee Has Jurisdiction Over Secretary Of Interior Nominee Confirmation Process. “‘Senator Manchin looks forward to meeting with Congresswoman Haaland and having her appear before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee as the first Native American nominee to be Secretary of the Interior,’ said Sam Runyon, Manchin's spokesperson. ‘He will carefully examine her record and qualifications to serve our country.’” [E&E News, 12/18/20]

Ranking Member John Barrasso Took Nearly One-Third Of His Total 2020 Oil And Gas Industry PAC Contributions During Last Quarter Of 2020 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]


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]

<table>
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<tr>
<th>POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE</th>
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<td>BP North America Employee PAC</td>
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<td>Ovintiv USA PAC</td>
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<td>TENASKA Employee PAC</td>
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<td>TransCanada USA Services, Inc. PAC</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
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[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] (VIDEO)

- **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.”** BARRASSO: “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] (VIDEO)

- **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] (VIDEO)


**2019-2020: Barrasso And Murkowski Were Featured Speakers For Oil & Gas Lobbying Groups.**
November 2019: Independent Petroleum Association Of America Featured Barrasso As “Special Guest” With Lobbyist Moderator At Its 90th Annual Meeting. More details can be found in the picture below.

Fall 2020: National Ocean Industries Association Featured Murkowski As Fall Meeting Speaker. More details can be found in the picture below.

- NOIA Was “America’s Offshore Energy Industry.” More details can be found in the picture below.
Senate ENR Committee Member Steve Daines Explicitly Indicated He Would Block Haaland For Being Unfriendly To Oil And Gas.

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

February 2020: Daines Said He Would Block Haaland’s Confirmation Unless His Demands For Oil And Gas Industry Were Met. DAINES: “‘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 Concerned Are Addressed, I Will Block Her Confirmation.” [Office of Senator Steven Daines, 2/5/21]


During “Vote-A-Rama” On Biden’s COVID Relief Package Murkowski And Eight Other GOP Senators On ENR Committee Introduced Total Of At Least 34 Amendments To Undercut Biden’s Environmental Agenda.

Budget Reconciliation Process Was Used In Effort To Pass Biden COVID-19 Relief Deal.

Budget Reconciliation Process Was Being Used As Vehicle For Biden's COVID-19 Relief Plan. “The Senate approved a budget bill early Friday that paves the way for passage of President Biden’s $1.9 trillion coronavirus relief package, with Vice President Harris casting the tiebreaking vote on the measure that will be key to enacting Biden’s first major legislative initiative. Passage of the budget bill by a 51-to-50 vote came just after 5:30 a.m. Friday, after an all-night Senate session during which senators plowed through dozens of amendments in a chaotic process known as a ‘vote-a-rama.’ Democrats cheered on progress to address the pandemic, while Republicans complained of partisanship and excessive spending.” [Washington Post, 2/8/21]

Barrasso Introduced At Least One Amendment Designed To Undercut Biden’s Environmental Agenda.

Daines Introduced Three Amendments Designed To Undercut Biden’s Environmental Agenda, Specifically Carbon Tax, Oil Leasing, And Paris Climate Agreement.


Murkowski Introduced At Least Four Amendments To Biden’s COVID-19 Relief Bill Designed To Undercut Biden’s Environmental Agenda, Specifically Federal Land Protection.

During Budget Reconciliation Process On Biden’s COVID-19 Relief Plan, Murkowski Introduced An Amendment “Prohibiting Establishment Of Any New Federally Protected Areas In Certain States,” Including States With More Than 30% Of Land And Water Was Federal. According to the Republican Policy Committee, Murkowski introduced SA 181, “prohibiting establishment of any new federally protected areas in certain states.” This “may include a state in which more than 30 percent of land and water … is federal.” [Republican Policy Committee, “2021 Budget Amendment Tracker,” 2/2/21; U.S. Congress, Congressional Record, 2/3/21]


During Budget Reconciliation Process On Biden’s COVID-19 Relief Plan, Murkowski Introduced An Amendment “Prohibiting Actions By The Executive Branch That Would Make The United States More Reliant On Countries With Weaker Environmental Or Labor Standards For Oil, Gas, Or Hardrock Mineral Production.” According to the Congressional Record, Murkowski introduced SA 182, “prohibiting actions by the executive branch that would make the United States more reliant on countries with weaker environmental or labor standards for oil, gas, or hardrock mineral production.” [U.S. Congress, Congressional Record, 2/3/21]

Hoeven Introduced At Least Eight Amendments Designed To Undercut Biden's Environmental Agenda, Specifically Permitting, Fracking, Carbon Tax, And Pipelines.


Cassidy Introduced At Least One Amendment Designed To Undercut Biden’s Environmental Agenda, Specifically Oil Leasing.

Lankford Introduced At Least Two Amendments Designed To Undercut Biden’s Environmental Agenda, Specifically Social Cost Of Greenhouse Gases.


Lee Introduced At Least Four Amendments Designed To Undercut Biden’s Environmental Agenda, Specifically Paris Climate Agreement And Oil Leasing.

During Budget Reconciliation Process On Biden’s COVID-19 Relief Plan, Lee Introduced SA 243, “Against International Agreements That Have Not Been Approved By 2/3 Of The Senate,” Which Was Aimed At Paris Climate Accords. According to the Republican Policy Committee, Lee introduced SA 243, which was an amendment “against international agreements that have not been approved by 2/3 of the Senate.” The amendment was categorized as “Energy/Environment/Ag.” [Republican Policy Committee, “2021 Budget Amendment Tracker,” 2/2/21]


Marshall Introduced At Least Two Amendments Designed To Undercut Biden’s Environmental Agenda.


• During Budget Reconciliation Process On Biden’s COVID-19 Relief Plan, Marshall Introduced SA 473, “Providing Assistance To Workers In The Oil And Gas Industries Due To Executive

**Risch Introduced At Least Five Amendments Designed To Undercut Biden’s Environmental Agenda, Specifically Permitting And Special Presidential Envoy For Climate.**


- **During Budget Reconciliation Process On Biden’s COVID-19 Relief Plan, Risch Introduced SA 742, Point Of Order “Against Funding For The Office Of Special Presidential Envoy For Climate.”** According to the Republican Policy Committee, Risch introduced SA 742, “POO against funding for the Office of Special Presidential Envoy for climate.” [Republican Policy Committee, “2021 Budget Amendment Tracker,” 2/2/21]


**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 Murkowski—Co-Sponsored Legislation To Block Biden’s Executive Action Pausing New Leases For Oil And Gas Drilling.


“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 Legislation.** These senators are:
  
  o John Barrasso
  o Bill Cassidy
  o Steve Daines
  o John Hoeven
  o Cindy Hyde-Smith
  o James Lankford
  o Mike Lee
  o Roger Marshall
  o Jim Risch

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

- **Center Square HEADLINE: “GOP Senators Propose Bill To Block Biden Energy Orders”** [Center Square, 1/31/21]

**At Same Time, At Least One Industry Group Sued To Block Biden’s Executive Action Pausing New Leases For Oil And Gas Drilling.**

**January 2021: Western Energy Alliance Sued Biden Administration Over Executive Order Pausing Oil And Gas Drilling Leases.** “A lawsuit challenging President Joe Biden’s indefinite pause on any new oil and gas leasing on federal public lands is sitting in federal court in Wyoming and Utah’s two senators are part of a group pushing new legislation to restrict the action from a sitting president without congressional authority. […] The ban, which is accompanied by a directive to end any future federal subsidies to the industry where possible, prompted a lawsuit by Western Energy Alliance, which represents hundreds of independent oil and gas producers in Utah and elsewhere in the West.” [Deseret News, 1/29/21]

**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 Steven Daines, 1/20/21]

**January 20, 2021: Following Biden’s Announcement 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]