**Gina McCarthy Nomination**

*Floor Speech*

Delivered By U.S. Senator Richard Blumenthal

Monday, July 8, 2013

I want to thank my colleague from California, Senator Boxer, for her very eloquent and powerful words on behalf of my client and friend, Gina McCarthy and her appointment as commissioner and administrator of the EPA. I don't make any pretense of matching the persuasiveness of her statement on behalf of Gina McCarthy, but I'm going to be speaking throughout this week and as long as it takes about Gina McCarthy because she is not only a client and friend, she is a consummate public servant, an environmental protector.

I have known her for many, many years. In fact, I was her lawyer, which is why I say she was a client. And as her lawyer, as attorney general of the state, she became a friend. Not just because of her personal qualities of integrity and intelligence, but her professionalism as an environmental protector who has sought always to recognize the need for a balance between environmental activism and economic growth, a balance involving as ardent and passionate protection of environmental values as anyone could possibly bring to this task, but also a willingness to listen, a willingness to hear all sides and consider all facts and in fact act as a passionate fact finder and lawyer as well as someone who respects the letter and spirit of the law.

And I want to talk to my colleagues about her respect for the law. It isn't just the letter of the law that she follows. It is the spirit and intent of the legislature, and I think that is important and should be important to this body, because she has reflected throughout her career working for two Republican governors, in Massachusetts and Connecticut, her dedication to the public interest and to the legislative intent of the laws that she fulfills. She is truly an environmental protector for all seasons. She is a woman for all seasons and a public servant for all seasons.

Over the years that we worked together, she was consistently tough, fair, and smart as an environmental law enforcer, and when she recognized the need to balance environmental activism with economic growth, she also understood that the two are almost always mutually supportive. I'm proud and delighted that she has demonstrated her willingness to assume this critical position and to face the kind of difficult path that this confirmation process has imposed. Achieving confirmation, which I actively support, should be truly bipartisan and blocking a vote on her nomination is disappointing and destructive – paralyzing partisan gamesmanship at its worst.

My former Connecticut colleague is well-respected in the environmental and business community in my state, and around the country for her dedication to listening and developing public leadership and practical solutions to environmental challenges. She protects environmental values and policies while enhancing economic opportunity. She is no foe of the business community or economic progress and job creation. In fact, she sees how protecting economic values is complementary and supportive to environmental activism.

The president couldn't have picked a more qualified person to lead the EPA at this critical time. The combination of her experience, intelligence, energy and unquestioned expertise will make Gina McCarthy an effective EPA administrator. She has a deep understanding that health and safety of the American people depend on clean air and water, and the American people more than ever understand that fact.

She is the right person for this job at this time, and I urge my colleagues to move forward with her confirmation to avoid obstructionist tactics, to embrace this nomination as good for all of the American people, for all of the interest that she has sought to represent, and to move forward as quickly as possible so that this critical agency will have the kind of leadership that is so important at this point in our history.

I urge my colleagues to support my friend and the President's choice to lead the EPA. I assure you you will not be disappointed. Thank you, Mr. President.