The most recent petroleum assessment report, conducted by the United States Geological Survey in 1998, estimated that there was between 3 billion and 16 billion barrels of oil in the area. But while the numbers alone are promising, the issue is how much oil is economically recoverable. At a market price of $24 per barrel, the United States Geological Survey estimates a 95-percent chance that 2.0 billion barrels or more would be economically recoverable and a 5-percent chance that 9.4 billion barrels or more would be economically recoverable.

In addition, the best estimates are that if we authorized drilling today, oil from ANWR will not be available for at least 7 to 12 years. Leasing agreements, geologic characteristics and transportation constraints will most certainly affect development rates and production levels. Assuming the best case scenario—peak production of oil at an increased development rate—the most promising production rate is 750,000 barrels per day. To put this in perspective, the United States consumes about 19 million barrels of oil and refined petroleum products a day. In the first 9 months of 2001, the United States imported 1.77 million barrels of oil per day from Canada, 1.73 million barrels of oil per day from Saudi Arabia, 1.58 million barrels of oil per day from Venezuela and 1.37 million barrels a day from Mexico.

Despite the fact that I stand here today in opposition to drilling in ANWR, I do recognize the importance of our country moving forward with a thorough review of our energy policy and I look forward to our discussions in the early part of next year. Our energy policy should be comprehensive and balanced. In addition to examining our options for increasing production of fossil fuels and stabilizing our supplies, we need to explore viable conservation initiatives, make important investments into the research and development of renewable and alternative energy sources, and consider adapting our regulatory and tax structures to help achieve these goals. I know that we can modify our energy polices without undermining our longtime environmental objectives.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I rise today to join my colleagues in opposition to the Murkowski-Lott-Brownback amendment, which would open up the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge—America's last untouched wildlife refuge—to oil development. It is both untimely to try to include such a controversial issue in an unrelated Railroad Retirement bill, and unwise to exploit this time of economic downturn and national security challenges to open up ANWR for the sake of narrow and divisive interests.

I believe there is no way to justify drilling in ANWR in the name of national security. Oil extracted from the refuge would not reach refineries for seven to ten years and would never satisfy more than two percent of our nation's oil demands at any one time. Therefore, it would have no discernible short- or long-term impact on the price of fuel or our increasing dependence on OPEC imports. Put another way, the amount of economically recoverable oil would increase our domestic reserves by only one third of one percent, which would not even make a significant dent on our imports, much less influence world prices set by OPEC.

Drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge would also set a terrible precedent. In the past 35 years, ever since Congress passed the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act, the government has not approved a single oil or gas exploration lease on public refuge lands. My concern is that opening up ANWR in the name of a misleading and irresponsible national security argument will not only degrade one of America's national treasures, but will also expose other priceless public lands to new drilling.

Mr. President, rather than drilling in ANWR, we must focus on crafting a deliberative, comprehensive policy that will permanently strengthen our national security. We need a bill that endows America with a strong and independent 21st century energy system by recognizing fuel diversity, energy efficiency, distributed generation, and environmentally sound domestic production as the permanent solutions to our nation's enduring energy needs. The energy provisions included in the Murkowski-Lott amendment fail to meet these goals and would instead prolong our antiquated over-reliance on traditional fossil fuels.

The Energy and Natural Resources Committee on which I serve held a series of hearings earlier this year that highlighted particularly promising ways we can accomplish these crucial goals. For example, these hearings revealed a broad consensus on the need to streamline regulatory approval of a privately funded natural gas pipeline from Alaska's North Slope to the lower 48 states. There are at least 32 trillion cubic feet of natural gas in existing Alaskan fields and building a pipeline to the continental U.S. would create thousands of jobs, provide a huge opportunity for the steel industry, and help prevent our nation from becoming dependent on foreign natural gas, from many of the same Middle Eastern countries from which we import oil.

Adopting energy efficient technologies is another way to significantly advance our national and economic security. For example, are my colleagues aware that automakers commonly use low-friction tires on new cars to help them comply with fuel economy standards? Because there are no standards or efficiency labels for replacement tires, however, most consumers unwittingly purchase less efficient tires when their originals wear out, even though low-friction tires would only cost a few dollars more per tire and would save the average American driver $100 worth of fuel over the 40,000-mile life of the tires. Fully phased in, better replacement tires would cut gasoline consumption of all U.S. vehicles by about three percent, saving our nation over five billion barrels of oil over the next 50 years. That's the same amount the United States Geological Survey says could be economically recovered from ANWR.

I believe that the only way to permanently ensure our nation's security is to look beyond policies that continue our country's century-old reliance on the extraction and combustion of fossil fuels. Now is the time to launch the transition to a new, 21st century system of distributed generation based on renewable energy sources and environmentally responsible fuel cells.

Imagine if today a significant portion of American homes and businesses produced their own electricity from solar panels on their roofs, and powered their cars with home-grown biofuels. Our country would no longer be at the mercy of OPEC, energy bills would be dramatically lower, our air would be cleaner, and our energy system could not be devastated by terrorist attacks on centralized power plants or transmission lines.

Mr. President, the American people know this is the direction our country must take. Just last month a Gallup Poll showed that 91 percent of Americans believe we should invest in new sources of energy such as solar, wind, and fuel cells. Ninety-one percent. How often do we see such universal support in our politically diverse country?

Mr. President, only these policies—which will be well represented in the energy bill Senators DASCHLE and BINGAMAN will bring to the floor early next year—will make our energy system truly secure and independent. I recognize, along with probably all of my colleagues, that inexpensive, reliable energy sources are the lifeblood of our economy and higher standard of living. Because our national, economic, and environmental security depend on the United States becoming less dependent on imported fossil fuels, we must act to develop more diverse and environmentally responsible supplies of domestic energy. Neither drilling in ANWR nor the rest of Murkowski-Lott energy provisions go far enough to accomplish these goals, and I encourage my colleagues to vote against invoking cloture on this amendment.

RAILROAD RETIREMENT

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I am proud to come to the floor today as a cosponsor of S. 697, the Railroad Retirement and Survivors Improvement Act. Senator BAUCUS and Senator HATCH have worked hard on this bill with railroad management and labor and have created a final product of which they should be proud. This bill will fundamentally improve the economic situation for more than 400,000 American railroad employees and their survivors, while reducing the tax burden on rail employees and railroads.

After three long years of hard work, rail labor and management have come together to create a new system to provide for rail retirees and their survivors. The Senate should ratify this proposal by adopting the amendment today.

Let me recap quickly what this amendment does: Most importantly, we allow survivors of railroaders to receive 100 percent of the benefits earned by their spouse, or, in some cases, parent. In most cases, that means an immediate doubling of income for employees' survivors. We also reduce the time needed for a worker to become vested in the Railroad Retirement system from 10 years to five years. That's consistent with 401(k) plans and similar retirement packages in other industries. Finally, we lower the tax burden on railroads and employees, while increasing the return on funds invested in the system. That's good for workers, and it's good for business. When income tax is factored in, some of these railroad companies have a combined tax burden of 50 percent. That's unforgivably high for any company, especially for smaller railroads, such as short lines, which are already struggling with huge capital needs.

Unfortunately, some will allege that this legislation is only needed because the Railroad Retirement System needed an economic ''bailout,'' but that is a false claim. Tier One benefits are funded by the same mechanism that we use to fund Social Security, employers and employees each pay a 15.3 percent payroll tax into a trust fund which is used to pay current benefits. Since 1950, assets in the Tier One fund and Social Security Trust Fund have been moved to ensure that railroaders were not disadvantaged by changes in Social Security benefits and also to unify benefits for workers eligible for both Social Security and Railroad Retirement benefits. Unfortunately, between 1950 and 1974, more than $3.5 billion flowed out of the Railroad Retirement Trust fund and into the Social Security Trust Fund. That money was finally repaid last year, and I think it's important that everyone understands that this bill does not in any way change Tier One benefits, which Railroad Retirement's equivalent of Social Security.

When this bill is enacted, more than 400,000 former employees, spouses and children will see an increase in benefits. More than 500 companies will see their overwhelming payroll tax burden decrease. That is a good deal for everyone, and there's no reason not to move forward on this legislation today. I urge my colleagues to support cloture.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The next 5 minutes is reserved for the Republican leader or his designee.

Mr. BROWNBACK. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, parliamentary inquiry: I believe there are 5 minutes reserved for the Republican leadership and then there are 5 minutes reserved for Senator DASCHLE and the Democratic leadership, and then we will be ready for a vote; is that correct?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader was to have from 5:05 p.m. to 5:10 p.m. Roughly half of that has been used. Without objection——

Mr. LOTT. I am not asking for additional time. I am trying to clarify how much time I have and the approximate time we will have a vote. I presume we will try to vote by 5:15 p.m.; is that correct?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is correct. The Senator has 2 minutes 10 seconds.

Mr. LOTT. I will use a portion of the time I have reserved.

Mr. President, it is unfortunate we are on the underlying bill at this point, the railroad retirement bill. While obviously there can be some arguments made for it and with some amendments it probably could pass by an overwhelming vote because the concept does have a large number of supporters on both sides of the aisle, I wish the Finance Committee had been able to bring this up in regular order, have hearings, have a markup, and report a bill. I believe the problems with the bill could have been addressed. There have been other issues, obviously, that have distracted our attention this year, but I still regret it has come up in this particular way.

ENERGY POLICY

As to the pending issues, I believe there are fewer issues more important facing our Nation today than the fact we do not have a national energy policy. We need to do it now, not later this month, not next month, and not February or March. It needs to be done as soon as possible, and it needs to be broad based.

It needs to provide for additional production. It needs to provide for alternative fuels and conservation. We need incentives for more production. We need to look at the transmission systems. We need to look at nuclear power.

All of it should be done. For that reason, I offered this amendment to the substitute that would allow us to have a full debate and hopefully a direct vote on this issue of a national energy policy.

CLONING

In addition, of course, we have coupled with this amendment the 6-month moratorium on the issue of cloning. We have heard from Senator MURKOWSKI and Senator BROWNBACK about the importance of both of these issues. Whether one thinks we should have some sort of research in this area of cloning, there is no question there is a lot of uncertainty about what this really means and how it would affect this whole question of human cloning. So Senator BROWNBACK—responsibly, I believe, in view of recent developments—has proposed a 6-month moratorium to give us time to sort this out, to talk among ourselves, and to hear from experts, and in the meantime not to have this steady march toward this question of human cloning. That is why these two issues are before us.

I recommend and urge my colleagues to vote against cloture on the energy bill and the cloning issue because we should not cut off debate. We should have full debate. We should have amendments to these issues. I believe with proper debate and with some amendments being offered, we could come up with an energy bill that would pass this Senate overwhelmingly, probably nearly unanimously. Would it be exactly the way I would write it or any Senator on either side of the aisle would write it? Probably not. Would it be a major step forward? Yes, it would. Should we get a direct vote on the cloning issue? We should, in my opinion.

So I urge my colleagues to vote no on cloture, continue this debate, and then vote no on the substitute, because if my colleagues vote yes on the substitute, invoke cloture, then they wipe this issue off the table and they will not have an opportunity to have a full debate and direct votes on the amendments.

Regardless of what happens, at some point we are going to get to the underlying substance. The energy and cloning language does not replace the railroad bill. It is on top of that. We are going to get to the substance, and there are going to be substantial amendments that will be offered to correct some of the concerns or at least address some of the concerns in this legislation. With some participation on both sides, I believe we could reach an agreement to pass this bill, with the energy and cloning parts added, by the middle or the latter part of this week.

The other side of it is, these issues are not going to go away. These are very important issues. In the case of energy, national security is involved. The economy of our country is involved. Supply is involved for the energy needs and for the economy of our country. In the case of the cloning issue, this is certainly a very important, very emotional issue. Both issues need to be addressed, and they will be addressed repeatedly on other bills when the opportunity presents itself if we do not do it. Let us do it on this bill. I believe we could facilitate getting an early completion of these issues and complete our work for the year.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.