longer extension than in the House bill we had the vote on yesterday.

S. 3098 does not include any tax hikes, reflecting the position 41 Senators took in a letter to Senator BAUCUS on April 23 of this year.

Our Republican alternative also includes the Ensign-Cantwell energy tax incentives, which were approved by the Senate earlier this year, 88 to 8.

In addition, S. 3098 does not contain the New York City earmark. It also does not contain the tax break for trial lawyers. It also does not contain Davis-Bacon expansion. And it also would not be vetoed by the President.

On balance, this is a bill that could pass the Senate and get signed by the President. We hope to pass it as soon as possible.

Let me conclude my remarks by saying that my good friend on the other side of the aisle and I both know how we pass these bills—we pass them together. As he frequently said when he was in the minority and in a position similar to mine, we are not the House. We are the Senate. It is not going to work to turn the Senate into the House. We all know that. Both sides have tried it. We have been in the majority and the minority, and the minority always insists they be part of the process.

We have two important bills here that clearly need to be completed. We all know how to get there—bipartisan negotiation on the Medicare bill and bipartisan negotiation on the tax extender bill.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The assistant majority leader is recognized.

Mr. DURBIN. I wish to say a word in response to my earlier objections and note the bill related to Medicare, presented by the Senator from Kentucky, the Republican minority leader, failed to include critical provisions that we had in our earlier legislation.

Our legislation would have provided financial assistance to low-income Medicare beneficiaries who cannot afford Medicare premiums and it would have finally moved us forward on the issue of mental health parity. This is an issue that is long overdue. There are millions of American families who are struggling with mental health issues. They understand that the high copayments for mental health services in effect deny service to a lot of those who cannot afford them. We wanted to address that in the bill. We thought it was a priority. The Senator from Kentucky in his measure they brought before us did not include that, and that is unfortunate.

I say to the Senator from Kentucky, I believe in the battle of ideas on the floor of the Senate. Looking back, in the time I have been here I have lost a lot of amendments on the floor. I have come here, brought the amendments, debated them, subjected them to a vote, and lost. But it was a fair fight. People spoke on both sides of the issue. The Senate spoke. That is how it should be. If the majority prevails, then we move forward. That is the only way this body can work.

But the Republicans have now taken a new approach and that approach is: We will not debate issues. We will not deliberate them. It is a take-it-or-leave-it situation. Seventy-seven filibusters have been used now. They are stopping this Medicare bill. Then when they realize how bad it looks back home—when they know they cannot explain it to seniors and disabled when the doctors who treat them say we are about to take a 10-percent pay cut and I may not be able to see you—they understand it is hard to explain that vote. So then they come to the floor and make a unanimous consent request to say let's drop in a bill and take care of the whole problem.

That is not the way the Senate works either. We don't want to turn the Senate into the House, but the Republican strategy is turning the Senate into a ghost town. We don't do anything here. We have procedural votes three or four times a week and then go home. If those in the Senate were paid on the basis of debate, deliberation, amendments, bills passed and that kind of effort, we would not earn a minimum wage around here because we never get to the substance anymore. There were 77 Republican filibusters so far, the latest on the energy issue.

For the Senator from Kentucky to come forward and say the reason we could not support the idea of moving forward on these energy tax credit extenders was because they involved a tax—do you know who was going to pay that tax? Companies that locate overseas, American companies that go overseas trying to avoid our taxes would have been subject to more taxes. The Senator from Kentucky is saying 41 of his members have taken a solemn pledge not to raise the taxes of those American companies that go overseas to avoid paying American taxes. How about that? Is that what we need in America, more incentives to take jobs offshore?

Senator BAUCUS in the Finance Committee had a reasonable approach to this, taking that money and putting it back into America for tax breaks for our families and to encourage energy production for our future, and the Republicans voted no—time and again they vote no. But the American people will have a final vote on November 4. They will remember the party that is trying to move forward an agenda to make this a better nation and they will remember the party of filibusters that votes no.

I yield the floor.

## RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

## RENEWABLE ENERGY AND JOB CREATION ACT OF 2008—MOTION TO PROCEED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to H.R. 6049, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 767, H.R. 6049, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide incentives for energy production and conservation, to extend certain expiring provisions, to provide individual income tax relief, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak as in morning business for up to 10 minutes.

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

### THE RISING COST OF ENERGY

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, I rise to discuss once again the rising cost of energy for Georgians and all Americans. My constituents continue to suffer due to the ever-increasing price of fuel. They are facing very difficult choices—between food and gasoline—between driving to work to earn money for their families and driving to the grocery store to feed their families.

I would like to take just a moment to read some of the letters I have received from my constituents that I think shed light on the real-world impact high gas prices are having on all Americans:

Mr. John Broomfield from Lawrenceville writes:

We are conserving, recycling, buying compact fluorescent lamps, driving less and slower, but we cannot do this alone. You in Congress must have the foresight and vision to pass policies that will actually help us. Please make it possible for our oil and energy companies to search for and extract our own natural resources. No matter where they are!

Mrs. Betty Byers from Marietta writes:

Dear Senator CHAMBLISS,

I appreciate all you can do to help develop a program that will allow the exploration of our country's energy sources without materially affecting our environment. We need to break away from relying on other countries (even our enemies) for our energy supplies. The rising price of gasoline is hurting ALL Americans. PLEASE—put our families first before environmentalists. We are all hurting from the rising cost of gasoline. Please do something ASAP.

I was pleased to hear yesterday both President Bush and Senator MCCAIN highlight their support for oil and gas leases in the Outer Continental Shelf. I think their public support for this effort will raise the profile of this important way in which Congress can act to help increase our supply of oil and gas to help lower gas prices for all Americans.

Is this the only answer? Absolutely not. But certainly this is the right direction to go.

The Department of the Interior released a comprehensive inventory of

OCS resources in February 2006 that estimated reserves of 8.5 billion barrels of oil and 29.3 trillion cubic feet—tcf—of natural gas. Congress has imposed moratoria on much of the OCS since 1982 through the annual Interior appropriation bills.

Some contend that lifting the moratoria would pose unacceptable environmental risks and threaten coastal tourism industries.

First, that is simply not true. In 2005, we suffered significant damage in the gulf coast region of our country as a result of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Yet off the coast of Louisiana, off the coast of Mississippi, off the coast of Texas, off the coast of Alabama, where Hurricane Katrina came through, we saw not one drop of oil spilled even though there are hundreds and hundreds of oil-producing platforms in that region of the gulf.

I come from a coastal State. There is nothing I would ever do that would in any way endanger the pristine beaches in my State or the coastal regions of any other State. But, simply stated, we now have the technology in place to ensure that type of thing never happens.

Second, we can do this in a way that ultimately lets the individual coastal States decide whether or not to opt out of this moratorium. So instead of politicians in Washington dictating what will happen off the coast of my home State of Georgia, the people of Georgia and the Governor of Georgia will get the ultimate decision. I am hopeful the Senate will come together to take this first step to increase our supply.

Would I like to see more development? Sure. I support the development, not just of the OCS but in other regions of our country too, where we know we have vast resources of energy. We need to make sure that when we do explore, we do it in the right way, that we do nothing that will endanger the environment of any part of our country. But we do have the technology to make sure that happens—whether it is on the Outer Continental Shelf, whether it is in the shale of the Rocky Mountains, or whether it is in the ANWR region of Alaska or other areas of this country where geologists are fairly certain that we do have additional resources. This will add to the supply we have so that, long term as well as short term, we can see gas prices in this country stabilize and hopefully begin to come back down to something more reasonable than what we are looking at today.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware is recognized.

DIESEL SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECTS BILL

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I am pleased to be here on the Senate floor this morning with my colleague from Ohio, Senator VOINOVICH. I want to reflect on what Senator CHAMBLISS just spoke about with respect to energy.

There are a wide variety of things we need to do: create biofuels, conserve energy. I think we need to incentivize a greater reliance on alternative and renewable forms of energy, including solar, wind, and geothermal. I believe we need to incentivize—and we are incentivizing—a new generation of nuclear powerplants in this country. Nine applications are in. We expect another 30 or so over the next couple of years, a wide variety of things: plug-in hybrid vehicles, very low emission diesel engines, and the list goes on and on. We do not need any one of them. We, frankly, need to do almost all of them.

One of my colleagues, one of the people I most enjoy working with in the Senate, is a former Governor from Ohio. We worked together for many years in the National Governors Association. Now I have the pleasure of working with him in the Senate.

Among the issues we worked on, we served together on the Environment and Public Works Committee. He came to me about 3 years ago and said: Let's talk about diesel emissions.

I said: OK. And I said: What do you want to say?

He said—I will paraphrase what he said: There is good news and bad news about diesel emissions.

I said: What is it?

He said: The good news is, diesel engines last a long time.

I said: OK.

Then he went on to say, and the bad news is, diesel engines last a long time. The old diesels we have on the road today, and most of the diesels we have on the road are old diesels, and there are millions of them. They are in trucks and buses and ships. They are in locomotives. But mostly, though, diesels put out a lot of bad emissions, bad stuff, that we end up breathing.

What Senator VOINOVICH came up with in 2005—he was good enough to let me be the lead Democrat on the legislation—was the proposal that says: Why do we not create a grant program, through EPA, that provides incentive money for State and local governments, for school districts with buses, for private truck companies and so forth, to incentivize them to begin to use new technology that goes into the diesel engines and reduces diesel emissions by as much as 80, 85 percent?

I said: That sounds like a great idea. I would be pleased to be your Democratic lead sponsor. A number of others ended up joining us. I think that Senator CLINTON was among them. But there were a variety of Republicans and Democrats who joined us.

I remember going to a press conference with Senator VOINOVICH about 100 yards from where we are today. We introduced the legislation that day. The next week there may have been a hearing—there may not have been a hearing. The next week after I think the legislation passed the Senate. Within a month or so, it was the law. I have never seen legislation move so quickly in my life.

We were here earlier this morning with one of the earlier discussions on the floor talking about filibusters and how our Republican friends are slow walking legislation, something that we were accused of doing when they were in the majority years ago.

But it is wonderful to have an example, once 3 years ago, with the passage of the Diesel Emission Reduction Act, and more recently with a change to the act which actually makes it even better, to see that we can still work together, we can set aside our partisan differences, Democrats and Republicans can find common ground, actually address our problems and resolve them.

So that sort of sets the stage for today. I think each of us is going to be recognized for 10 minutes, and when I run out of time, I may ask for a little bit of extra time if there is not a press of colleagues who want to come to the floor.

But let me start off by laying the groundwork and to say a special thank-you to our colleagues in the House of Representative and in the Senate for passing S. 2146. It is a bipartisan bill that gives EPA the authority to accept, as part of air quality settlements, diesel emission reduction supplemental environmental projects.

What does that mean? That means, when EPA enters into some kind of enforcement action against a polluter, for example, and out of that enforcement action comes a requirement for the polluter to pay certain fines or charges, the idea is, how can that money be used by EPA?

We want to make sure that money can be used by EPA to further reduce diesel emissions; to install this technology, diesel emissions reduction technology, in buses, in trucks, in all kinds of emitters of pollution of diesels. So we ran into a problem with this over the last couple of years.

Today—actually yesterday—the legislation was passed. We resolved that problem. I also wish to thank some of our colleagues—Senators INHOFE, CLINTON, CARDIN, ALEXANDER—for joining Senator VOINOVICH and me on this latest version of this legislation.

This is a small bill. This is a small bill with big consequences, big consequences for jumpstarting the effort to clean up our Nation's diesel vehicle fleet and making our air cleaner and toxin free. Like a number of our colleagues, I am a strong advocate for diesel engines, clean diesel engines. They are powerful, they are fuel efficient, and with the implementation of EPA's new fuel and engine regulations, they will also be a lot cleaner. However, dirty diesel emissions can be deadly. Reducing emissions from diesel engines is one of the most important air quality challenges facing our country. This week we are going to do something about it.

EPA estimates there are some 11 million diesel engines in America that lack the latest pollution control technology. When diesel engines are built today for cars, trucks, buses, and so

forth, they are required to have the latest technology. The fuel they use is very low in sulphur content today, so we end up dramatically reducing the kind of damage and threat to our public health.

But there are 11 million old diesels out on the road, and they are going out on the road for a long time. Taken together, these engines produce something like 1,000 tons of particulate matter every day. I will talk a little bit more about particulate matter in a moment.

As a result, dirty diesel emissions are linked to some 21,000 premature deaths, hundreds of thousands of asthma attacks, millions of lost workdays, and numerous other health impacts every year. In fact, diesel soot is linked to more premature deaths in this country than firearms, HIV, or drunk driving. The risks are nationwide, but they are especially high risk in urban areas.

I have a chart here. Let me see if I can point out a couple of things. First of all, here is Ohio. Here is Ohio, where I went to Ohio State University, along with my colleague, GEORGE VOINOVICH. Here is Cleveland, OH, where Senator VOINOVICH is from. This is dark red. This is dark red. In fact, much of Ohio is dark red.

Over here is Delaware. Delaware is in an area of our country which is dark red. If you look down at the color code, there from the lowest impact, which is pink in color, to the highest impact, which is like a dark red color. For Nebraska, our Presiding Officer's State, it is looking pretty good, part of it in the pink.

But what we want to make sure is that the whole country is in the pink; not in the dark red, not in the red, not in the dark pink. We want to make sure it is in the light pink. What that means is healthier air for us to breathe for us and our families.

Why is diesel so toxic? Let me take a moment to show this. This is a diesel particle. It looks big, doesn't it? But in reality they are very small. You cannot even see them with the eye. But we breathe them, nonetheless. The fact is, as we walk about Washington, DC, or wherever we live, we probably breathe some of these little babies as well.

But at the core is something called elemental carbon. Around that core are organic carbon compounds. Around that, in the yellow here, secondary sulphate and nitrate. Surrounding them are metals. Then surrounding that on the outer core are toxins.

Diesel exhaust is a mixture of vapors and fine particles. The small particles have a core of carbons, as I pointed out, with a layer of toxins, many of which can cause cancer.

Here we have a picture of the lungs—in fact, two lungs. We have in fine detail—some of this matter is hard to tell. This is called the alveoli. That is where the oxygen that we breathe in is actually transferred into the blood system. And when these particles get down this far, they get into the blood system. That is what causes cancer.

But the fine particles can get deep into our lungs to cause inflammation. They cause scarring of the lungs, and some of that leads to bronchitis. It can lead to asthma. But when they get down into the bloodstream itself, they get spread all over the body and cause lung cancer and spread cancer to other parts of our bodies.

If that were not enough, these carcinogens can cause not just cancer but death. And some of the 21,000 people who will die this year will die not from bronchitis, not from asthma or asthma attacks, but they will die from cancer. This is why poor air quality, caused by old, dirty diesel engines, can lead to higher than average cancer rates for those living along heavily traveled interstates, highways such as Interstate 95 which stretches all the way from Maine in the north down to Florida. It runs right through my State of Delaware and a bunch of other States, too, on the east coast. And what we have—notice this curve—what we have is the zone of greatest exposure.

When you have a highway such as I–95—or it can be Interstate 70 or any other interstate or densely traveled highway, especially one with a lot of buses and trucks on it, what you see is a concentration of diesel exhaust right around the highways. And the threat to our health is the greatest for those who travel the highways or live or work in the near proximity of those highways.

That is the bad news. Here is the good news. The good news is we now have the pollution control technology to greatly reduce these deadly diesel particles and therefore greatly impact human health.

In 2004, the EPA began to address these public health concerns by requiring that all new heavy-duty highway diesel vehicles had to install pollution control technology starting in 2007. We also changed the law with respect to sulphur content. It is 15 parts per million sulphur fuel that is sold, I think, after last year. It began last year. They had to reduce the sulphur content rather dramatically.

However, this ruling is a problem because it does nothing for the millions of diesel engines that are already on the roadways, as I said earlier. Reducing diesel emissions in the current fleet could save an estimated 100,000 lives between now and the year 2030.

In response to what the EPA did in 2004, Congress passed the Diesel Emission Reduction Act, which Senator VOINOVICH introduced, and was good enough to let me and others join him in doing that. That program, again, established the voluntary national and State grant loan program to clean up some of those old diesel engines in buses and trucks and trains and ships.

Our intention was to build upon a program that EPA already had in place which allowed air quality polluters to fund diesel cleanup programs as part of their settlement with EPA.

For example, in October of last year, EPA reached a settlement agreement with a company called American Electric Power. As part of that settlement, American Electric Power will spend about $21 million retrofitting diesel engines with pollution controls. In fiscal year 2008—that is the year we are in right now—Congress appropriated $49 million to help fund the Diesel Emission Reduction Act.

So we had, on one hand, a settlement with American Electric Power, a $21 million settlement, the moneys of which were to be used for diesel emission reduction technology. Then we provided an appropriation in 2008, $49 million, to help fund the same program.

Put that money together, I think it adds up to about $70 million. That is enough money to have a significant impact on diesel emissions and to improve our air quality.

Unfortunately, EPA determined that if Congress funds through an appropriation the Diesel Emission Reduction Act grants, EPA could no longer accept diesel projects as part of air quality enforcement settlements. They could not use the $21 million they got in the settlement from American Electric to also help fund the program.

There is enough need. We could spend 10 times the amount of money we appropriated to help clean up diesel emissions. The need is huge. There are 11 million vehicles. We could spend money for a long time, and a lot more money than we are appropriating. But the idea of having $70 million versus $49 million is a big thing. We want to make sure we have and use the money from these settlements. So it does not make much sense to me or to Senator VOINOVICH.

The EPA said: Sorry, our hands are tied. We think this is the law, and we have to abide by it. What this bill does is it corrects the unintended consequence of successfully funding the Diesel Emission Reduction Act. As a result, we are going to be able to use settlement money. We are going to be able to use money that we appropriated for diesel emission reductions. We will be able to use the combined amount; parcel it out to States for grants and for loans and to get diesel emissions down and under control.

The House amended our bill and said: We want to add the District of Columbia to the 50 States that can participate in this grant program established by the Diesel Emission Reduction Act.

Let me close by saying, I do not think there is a silver bullet to reduce the environmental risks that lead to cancer, that lead to asthma, or to death. But cleaning up emissions from our Nation's diesel fleet is certainly a positive step. It is a diesel fleet that can help us use more judicially the resources that we have in this country, to use them more wisely but to be able to use that diesel engine in a way that doesn't threaten our health. That is a very good thing.

In closing, I thank Senator VOINOVICH for the terrific leadership he

provided over the years on this particular subject and for allowing others to work with him, to enact the Diesel Emissions Reduction Act and then to join me in coming back and saying the unintended consequence, where the EPA couldn't spend the settlement money and appropriations to finance diesel retrofits, that we had to take care of that. They can spend them both and reduce emissions.

Senator VOINOVICH and I sometimes lament how difficult it is to get anything done around here. On a day such as today, when it is a beautiful day outside, clear skies, beautiful day, walking from the train station, walking right up Delaware Avenue, seeing the Capitol at the top of the hill, the green trees, blue skies, the sun shining, it was beautiful. We wish to make sure that more days look like today, not only in Washington, DC, but all over the country, that the air is safe to breathe.

With this legislation, it will be a lot safer for years to come. I salute my friend, Senator VOINOVICH, for helping make it happen.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. VOINOVICH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

Mr. VOINOVICH. Mr. President, ordinarily I don't come over and speak in morning business. As so with many Members of the Senate, I could be at three places at the same time and justify each one of them. I came today because of the fact that our colleagues and the citizens of this country need to know there are many instances where both Republicans and Democrats can come together and get something done. I have been very fortunate over the years to know the Presiding Officer, a former Governor, to know Governor Carper, now Senator CARPER. We worked together in the National Governors Association. I think sometimes we were more effective as Governors getting things done than as Members of the Senate.

The fact is, we came together a couple of years ago and realized that one of the most significant sources of pollution, in terms of particulate matter, were emissions from diesel engines. As Senator CARPER pointed out, we now have new vehicles on the road that are much cleaner than anything we have seen before. We also knew there were some 11 million on- and off-road vehicles that would be around a long time and that if we were going to make significant improvement in reducing emissions from diesel engines, we needed a new program. We got together and supported the Diesel Emissions Reduction Act, a bipartisan bill. We must have had 25 or 30 sponsors, over 150 groups supported it. That was the fastest bill I have ever seen passed around here. I think we had it done in 45 days.

The program today is currently supported by over 250 environmental, industry, and public interest groups. When DERA was announced, the EPA estimated the 5-year program, $200 million per year, would achieve $10 billion in health benefits. Senator CARPER has done a very good job of talking about how these particulates are harmful. As a matter of fact, I am going to check into a program that is being funded by the EPA in Cincinnati, where they are measuring the impact of diesel engines on infants in urban areas. Preliminary information I have received indicates it is a very serious problem. Anything we can do to deal with reducing these emissions is significant. In addition, we talk about doing something about pollution. This legislation, if fully funded, will result in the most significant reductions of particulates of any program in the country. It will help communities, such as mine in Ohio and others around the country, to meet new requirements that have come out for ozone and particulate matter.

The need for this program from fiscal year 2003 to 2005 was great, but EPA was only able to fund 25 percent of the applications under the Clean School Bus Program. A lot of school buses need to have this kind of technology. Without it, they are carting kids around, and when they stop, the stuff is being poured out. It is very significant.

Over that period, from 2003 to 2005, only a third of Ohio's applications were funded, 5 out of 15, but broad support for DERA is changing this situation. People are starting to realize this is a neat program. It is really working. For fiscal year 2008, DERA was funded at almost $50 million. The House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee has acted to increase DERA funding to $65 million for 2009.

The thing that is neat about this is that we look at supporting programs. I always asked the question, as I am sure the Presiding Officer did when he was Governor and Senator CARPER when he was Governor: How much more money do you leverage with the money you are spending? In other words, the State puts money in, and how many other people are willing to kick in and make a difference? In this program, we have 50 States participating. In order for the States to participate, they have to create their own State-level programs. States can get more Federal funding by adding State dollars. So if the State matches the Federal allocation dollar for dollar, it will receive an additional 50-percent allocation. This is a real incentive for States to get involved. When we first put this program together, we thought, for every dollar we put out, we would leverage another $3 from State and local government. Also, the private sector is really interested in this program. My State has taken a leadership role in that effort. A coalition of groups have come together in Ohio to use the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program, the CMAQ Program, as we know it, to fund diesel retrofits. CMAQ provides State and local governments funding for transportation projects to help meet air quality requirements, and the funds are apportioned to State transportation agencies based on population and air quality programs in the region.

Still more money is needed. Enforcement settlements have been a good source of funding for diesel retrofits. For example, from 2001 to 2006, EPA entered into diesel emission reduction Supplemental Environmental Projects valued at $45 million. In 2007, an enforcement settlement with AEP, American Electric Power, a company in my State, included approximately $21 million for diesel retrofits. In other words, companies that have been fined have been able to take the money they have been fined and put it into this fabulous program that reduces diesel emissions.

Last July, though, the EPA issued a policy that eliminated the use of this money to finance diesel retrofits. It is hard to believe. This policy was based on the Agency's interpretation of the Miscellaneous Receipts Act and prohibits the Agency from accepting SEPs that fund activities for which the Agency received funds through appropriations, a lot of gobbledygook. EPA's inability to enter into diesel emission reduction SEPs has eliminated an important tool for environmental protection. What this bill basically says is, we are going to amend the Miscellaneous Receipts Act and say that in addition to the money we appropriate for this program, they can also use SEP money for this program. Everyone believes this is a very meritorious action we are taking. It will increase substantially the amount of money that is made available.

I am hopeful that in the next several years, we will see one of the most robust programs in the world underway with the diesel emissions program. We pass stuff around here, we debate it, but so often nothing happens. Here is a perfect case of where Republicans and Democrats have worked together on something that means something. It is going to help. It is the kind of program I can go back to Ohio and say, when they are complaining about the ozone and the particulate and what are you doing to help us: We have the Diesel Emissions Reduction Act that is going to make a difference for you and your community. Hopefully, working together, as I mentioned, we will see some significant reductions in emissions and significant improvement in public health, particularly for our children.

Again, I publicly acknowledge the great partnership Senator CARPER and I have had. There are so many things we work on. When we finally get to them, such as the Clean Air Act we had a couple years ago, we just missed making it happen. But on this one, we did make it happen. I am hopeful that Senator CARPER and I, working in the Clean Air and Nuclear Safety Subcommittee, will be able to collaborate on other significant legislation that

will make a real difference for our country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASEY). The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. CARPER. The Presiding Officer who is leaving the chair was Governor of Nebraska, and he had the opportunity to work with Senator VOINOVICH and myself at that time. Among the people we worked with was the father of our brand new Presiding Officer, the former Governor Casey. We have been reflecting back on the way it was and how we worked so well across party lines in those days. The legislation that we celebrated passage of yesterday is another indication we can still do that right here in the Senate.

I wish to ask a question, through the Presiding Officer, of Senator VOINOVICH. Senator VOINOVICH mentioned leveraging. Every dollar we appropriate in Federal dollars, EPA is now able to use for Supplemental Environmental Projects to install clean diesel technology to clean up emissions of diesel. He mentioned we actually leveraged some money from other sources, State and local governments, maybe school districts, private companies too. So for every $1 of Federal, we get another $3 to use from other sources. My recollection is that in terms of cost benefit—cost being how much it costs to install the technology—there is a health benefit that is a lot greater than the $1 we spend on the technology itself. I want to say it is $12, $13. I ask Senator VOINOVICH, if I may, through the Presiding Officer, is my recollection correct? Is there a 13-to-1 benefit in terms of a $1 investment in the technology and $13 in payoff, in terms of health benefits?

Mr. VOINOVICH. Mr. President, I think it is much more than that. If you look at the numbers I used in my presentation, it is much greater than that in terms of the public health benefits that are derived as a result of the program.

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, you were not presiding when we looked at this map earlier, but this is a map of the United States, obviously. This is a map that shows the mortality risks from U.S. diesel emissions. The best color to have is pink, and those States have relatively low diesel emissions and fairly low threats for whether it is bronchitis or asthma or cancer from diesel emissions.

If you happen to be from a State such as Ohio—where Senator VOINOVICH is from, and where I spent part of my youth and went to college—or if you happen to be from Delaware or happen to be from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, things are a bit grimmer.

What we have come up with, thanks in large part to Senator VOINOVICH's leadership, is a way to turn the dark red to pink. We want to get the whole country in the pink. Hopefully, in a relatively few years we, will.

The last point I want to mention—Senator VOINOVICH comes from a State that builds a lot of cars, trucks, and vans. Delaware has the only two automobile assembly plants that still exist anywhere up and down the east coast. We are fearful of losing our Chrysler plant at the end of next year, and we would be down to a single GM plant. Chrysler has invested in a new technology with Daimler, and their technology is for low-emission diesel vehicles—very low emission diesel vehicles. The emissions are so low and the fuel efficiency is so high, the people who buy those very low-emission diesel vehicles starting, I think, next year, will be eligible for the same kind of tax credit they would get by buying a hybrid vehicle today, with a tax credit anywhere from $500 to $3,500 per vehicle.

We want to encourage people to buy those low-emission diesel engines. But as people are buying those very low-emission, highly energy-efficient diesels, we want to make sure the other 11 million old diesel engines that are on the road—that are not as fuel efficient; that are not as clean burning—that we get to work at cleaning them up.

The good thing we have accomplished, working with House and Senate Democrats and Republicans, is we are striking a blow for clean air but not at the cost of energy efficiency.

With that, Mr. President, I will yield the floor.

Again, I say to my friend, Senator VOINOVICH: On to more battles. We will take on more battles, and we will do good things.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ALEXANDER. 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. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 12 minutes as in morning business.

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

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I see the Senator from Delaware. I wonder, through the Chair, if he needs to speak.

Mr. CARPER. I just did. I thank the Senator.

GAS PRICES

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I have invited Tennesseans to send me e-mails or to write letters about how high gas prices are affecting their daily lives. I am hearing from a lot of them.

Pat Taylor of Morristown, TN, who is the director of the local Meals on Wheels program, tells me the drivers travel 1,100 miles a day to deliver meals, but food and gasoline prices could force many meal recipients into retirement homes if something is not done. Mileage reimbursements are not sufficiently covering the expenditures of drivers.

Dr. Kathryn Stewart, of Winchester, TN, tells me that the school nutrition director has had to raise school lunch prices 50 cents per meal to compensate for the rise in gas and food prices, but they will still lose money this year. She worries about the future of her business there.

Abbie Byrom, of Johnson City, TN—that is in the eastern part of our State—is a third-year medical student at East Tennessee State University. She lives on loans through the school system. But, she says, cost-of-living loans do not cover expenses on traveling to all the area hospitals and medical centers. She says most of her fellow students are living by maxing out their credit cards.

Jerry and Judy Wilson, of Monterey, TN, run a weekend concessions business, but sales have been cut in half because of rising gas prices. They say: People can't come to the events because of fuel prices.

Joshua Yarbrough, of Franklin, TN, moved his family with three children to a larger house in Franklin, outside Nashville, 4 years ago, and is now having trouble paying his mortgage because of rising gas prices.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD, following my remarks, each of these letters.

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

(See exhibit 1.)

Mr. ALEXANDER. So, Mr. President, given the extraordinary impact of $4-a-gallon gasoline on the people of Tennessee and the people of this country, they are looking to us in the Senate and the Congress to do something about this.

I noticed there are some interesting new professors of economics on the Democratic side of the aisle who seem to be trying to repeal the law of supply and demand. I have been studying this strange development, and I am trying to trace the source of it. It would appear that maybe the source of it is the young new chairman of the department of economics on that side of the aisle, because the New York Times reports this morning that Senator OBAMA opposes drilling in Alaska, and says he is ''not a proponent,'' in his words, of nuclear power, which provides 20 percent of our electricity today and 70 percent of our clean carbon-free electricity. He would consider banning new coal plants without clean coal technology. Coal produces 45 percent of our electricity today. In 2006, he voted against further exploration in the Gulf of Mexico for oil and gas, in a portion of the Gulf known as Lease 181. More than 70 Senators from both sides of the aisle voted for it, which, so far as I can tell, leaves Senator OBAMA with not much more than a national windmill policy, as opposed to a national energy policy, for this great United States of America, which consumes every year 25 percent of the energy in the world.

Of course, it leaves these new professors of economics with the demand

part of the supply-and-demand equation.

We Republicans also believe in demand. We are for green buildings. We believe most of the new buildings ought to be green buildings. That is probably the easiest way to save electricity. Japan has discovered over the last several years that most of its failure to reach the Kyoto standards it was trying to achieve came from the inefficiency of buildings.

Half of us on the Republican side voted for the fuel efficiency standards in December. That has to do with the demand side of the equation—using less oil, less energy. The Oak Ridge National Laboratory scientists told me that the single most important thing we could do as a Congress would be to increase the fuel efficiency standards by 40 percent. That means the cars and trucks in America should average 35 miles per gallon by the year 2020. We voted to do that in a bipartisan way. So we agree on that part of demand as well.

Then we Republicans, as well as many Democrats, I am sure, are ready to give strong support to the idea of plug-in electric cars and trucks.

I was in Nashville on Monday with Congressman BUD CRAMER, who is a Democratic Congressman from Alabama. He and I cochair the TVA Congressional Caucus.

The question we presented for the hearing was, Will electric plug-in cars and trucks help lower $4 gas prices? I believe the answer is yes, and so did a lot of the people who came to see the cars.

One of the vehicles there was a plug-in electric car made by the A123 company in Boston. It is a Toyota Prius, of which there are now a million on the road, and the A123 company had converted the Prius, which is a 40-miles-per-gallon car, into an electric plug-in vehicle, and it is now a 100-miles-per-gallon car. All they did was replace the car's smaller rechargeable battery with a larger rechargeable battery, and they put a cord on the back of it and the driver plugs the cord in at night at his house in a wall socket and he charges it up for 60 cents. So instead of filling it up for $70, he is charging it up for 60 cents.

According to the General Motors Company witness who testified at our hearing on Monday, 75 percent of us drive fewer than 40 miles a day. I know I drive less than 40 miles a day going back and forth when I am in Washington, so if I were driving that electric plug-in car, I would be using no gasoline whatsoever.

So plug-in cars and trucks are a real prospect and a real important part of the demand part of the supply-and-demand law we strongly support on this side of the aisle, and so do many Democrats as well. It is 100 percent American energy. GM, Toyota, Nissan, Ford—all are going to be selling these cars to Americans in the year 2010, which is a model year that is about a year and a half away. Sixty cents is the cost of the charge for a 30-mile drive. It is about the same amount of electricity it takes to use your water heater for 1 day. It doesn't require new powerplants because the Tennessee Valley Authority chairman who was at the hearing told us that they have plenty of extra electricity at night when our lights are off, so we can plug in at night.

This involves trucks too. There were FedEx delivery truck witnesses at the hearing. They are already using hybrid delivery trucks, and they are planning to use that technology for big trucks.

If we were to electrify half our cars and trucks in America over time—which is 120 million, since we have about 240 million cars and trucks in this country—we could cut in half the amount of oil we import. That would cut from $500 billion to $250 billion the amount of money we are sending overseas to people, many of whom are funding terrorists who are trying to kill us. It would strengthen the dollar. It would certainly lower fuel costs for those who are plugging in their cars instead of driving them—or plugging them in instead of filling them with gasoline—and it would reduce the demand for oil so much that it would surely reduce the price of gasoline as well.

Plug-in electric cars and trucks would lead us to support a number of other initiatives: Smart meters so that in our homes we could pay TVA—or whoever our electric utility is—a little more in the afternoon for electricity used at peak power, but at night we would have cheap power for our plug-in vehicles. Battery research. The additional cost of such a plug-in vehicle is determined primarily by how rapidly we can develop batteries that will take a charge to allow 40, 60, 80, 100, or even more miles each time because we will be running coal plants at night to provide this electricity. We would need to clean up our coal plants, but we should be doing that anyway, whether they are in Pennsylvania or Tennessee or Ohio. We need to get rid of the sulfur and the nitrogen and the mercury, and we need a crash program to find a practical way to recapture the carbon from coal plants if we are serious about dealing with climate change.

So there are a number of policy changes we on the Republican side of the aisle are ready to make to lower gas prices and to honor the law of supply and demand. But the problem is the new professors of economics on that side of the aisle, led by Senator OBAMA, are trying to take the word ''supply'' out of the law of supply and demand. If we are going to drive plug-in electric cars and trucks, we are going to need a supply of electricity, so we need to be building five or six nuclear powerplants a year. But the professors on that side say they are not proponents of that; they don't think it's part of the solution. It has to be a part of the solution in a country that uses 25 percent of all of the electricity in the world.

It would be embarrassing to say that France is ahead of us in this, but they are. Eighty percent of the electricity in France is from nuclear powerplants. It is clean—no mercury, no sulfur, no nitrogen, no carbon. They meet the climate change standards today, and if they shift in France to driving electric cars and trucks, they will have no problem. They can plug them in at night to recharge them. They will have no pollution problems. They will reduce their dependence on oil. They will save money in their pockets. They won't be exporting money to Middle Eastern countries or to others that may be funding terrorists. They will be ahead of us if we don't advance the technology we invented and begin to build five or six new nuclear plants a year for the foreseeable future.

We also need to take the ill-advised moratorium off oil shale. We have plenty of oil shale in the ground and new environmentally sound ways to get it out of the ground. That is a part of supply as well. Most of that is in our Western States.

We also need to give other States the opportunity to do what Texas, Louisiana, Alabama, and Mississippi already do, which is to explore 50 miles offshore for oil and gas. We have plenty of that. We could be producing an extra million barrels a day of oil and gas from offshore exploration, and by adding to the supply we would be reducing the price of gasoline and bringing it down below $4. We need to change the law and do that. Senator MCCAIN says we need to do it.

What would it involve to give States that option? The Virginia State Legislature, for example, has said they would like to explore off the coast of Virginia, at least for natural gas. So we need to lift the Federal moratorium and the Presidential Executive order that keeps them from doing that offshore. If I were the Governor of Virginia, I would certainly want to do it. I would put the rigs 50 miles out where no one could see them.

We know we can do it in an environmentally clean way. We heard a lot of bad things as a result of Hurricane Katrina, but we didn't hear of one oil spill from any of the oil and gas rigs that are all in the Gulf of Mexico. So we know how to drill cleanly. The oil spills we have are from cargo freighters that are bringing oil from overseas to us. That is where the problem is. If we were exploring offshore for our own oil and gas, we would not only be lowering our gas prices, but we would be providing States and the Federal Government with additional revenue as well. Under the formula we passed in 2006 for Lease 181 in the Gulf of Mexico, Virginia would get 37.5 percent of the dollars. What would that do for Virginia? They already have a good higher education system, but I think if I were the Governor, I would say: Let's put a lot of that in a trust fund for higher education and make the Virginia colleges and universities the best in the world

without raising taxes. Let's put some of it to nourish the beaches of Virginia. Let's maybe use some of it for roads or for health care or for lowering taxes. They could do all of that with their three-eighths of those revenues.

We also said that one-eighth of the money from that offshore exploration in Lease 181 would go to the State side of the Land and Water Conservation Fund for city parks and greenways and open spaces in Pennsylvania and Tennessee and all across this country, which we have been trying to do for 40 years. The whole idea of the Land and Water Conservation Fund enacted in the 1960s was to say: We will fund it up to $900 million a year from money from offshore oil and gas exploration; we recognize that exploration is an environmental burden, so we will turn part of it into an environmental benefit. We have never fully funded the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and this is a way to do that.

There are other ideas—Senator SALAZAR, Senator KYL, and I join in this as well—to take some of the excessive money from offshore drilling and fully fund the National Park Centennial Initiative that President Bush has proposed to celebrate the 100th anniversary of our National Park System. I know of the excitement around the Great Smoky Mountains National Park as we have added 55 new park personnel to that park and a lot of new private funding for park projects simply because of this Centennial Initiative the President has proposed. We need to fund it, and this would be a way to fund it.

So we need a supply of electricity if we are going to drive electric cars. We need oil shale if we are going to continue to produce oil, from which gasoline is made. We need offshore exploration—another way to increase the supply of oil.

I believe, as do many others on our side of the aisle, that we should also be exploring in Alaska. Jay Leno said the other night that the Democrats objected to that because they said it wouldn't produce any oil for 10 years. Well, as Jay Leno said, that is what the Democrats said 10 years ago. Presidents and Senators are supposed to look ahead, to look down the road. If we can add a million barrels of oil a day from Alaska; if we can add a million barrels of oil a day from offshore exploration; if we can add 2 million barrels of oil a day from oil shale, which we can do; if we can build five or six nuclear plants a year and help us create carbon-free, clean energy so we can electrify our cars and trucks and reduce our demand for oil, then we will have lower gas prices because we will be honoring the immutable law of supply and demand which says find more and use less.

The difference between us is that on this side of the aisle we believe in the law of supply and demand: find more and use less. On that side of the aisle, they seem to believe in a different economics, which is use less. They want to repeal supply and only insist on demand. So there is a fundamental difference.

I am glad Senator MCCAIN must have gone to a different college of economics than the one I think I sense on the other side of the aisle. He has suggested that we do both, that we increase our supply and we reduce our demand by finding more oil and using less oil. He has specifically supported offshore drilling if States want to do that. He has specifically said we should lift the moratorium on oil shale and proceed in an environmentally responsible way to explore for that. He has said as well that we need to move ahead with five or six nuclear powerplants a year, and he has been a strong advocate for green buildings, for fuel efficiency, and for plug-in electric vehicles. At the same time, he has said he believes we need to take steps to deal with climate change, emphasizing the importance of nuclear power because that provides 20 percent of all of our electricity but 70 percent of our carbon-free power.

So I look forward to the debate over the next few months. It is beginning to come into shape. Two different views of economics: an attractive young head of the department from that side of the aisle who wants to change the law of supply and demand to only include demand, which apparently would leave us with a national windmill policy; or a more grizzled Senator who apparently went to a different college of economics who believes in the old-fashioned law of supply and demand and would like to focus on both.

This will be a debate worthy of the Senate. It will be important to all of those Tennesseans who are writing me wanting that $4 per gallon price to go down. My recommendation to them is to vote for Senators and vote for Presidents who will both increase our supply and reduce our demand—who will find more, use less, and not try to invent a new theory of economics which will leave us with our lights off and our gas prices high.

I yield the floor.

EXHIBIT 1

From: Pat Taylor
Sent: Thu 6/12/2008 9:43 AM
To: Alexander,Senator
Cc: Susan Luker
Subject: Gas Prices Affect Meals On Wheels In East Tennessee

DEAR SENATOR ALEXANDER: My name is Pat Taylor. I am Program Director for Douglas Cherokee Economic Authority Senior Nutrition Program (Meals On Wheels). We are currently serving hundreds of elderly and disabled citizens in the counties of Cocke, Grainger, Hamblen, Jefferson, Monroe, and Sevier. I am writing to you on behalf of all of these homebound clients who receive our meals five days a week. We currently drive 1,100 miles per day to deliver these meals. With the increase in food costs as well as gasoline prices, this has become a burden for our program and our delivery aides. They use their own vehicles to deliver. With gas prices rising daily, the mileage reimbursement they receive desperately needs to be increased in order for meal delivery to continue.

Anything you can do will be greatly appreciated. Many elderly and disabled Tennesseans are able to avoid being institutionalized because of the daily contact and nutrition provided by the Senior Nutrition Program.

Sincerely,

PAT TAYLOR,
*Director, Douglas Cherokee Economic Authority, Senior Nutrition Program.*

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From: Kathryn Stewart
Sent: Fri 6/13/2008 2:19 PM
To: Alexander, Senator
Cc: Dr. Kathryn Stewart
Subject: Gas Prices

I am the School Nutrition Director for our school system. The rise is food and gas prices has pushed me to raise school lunch prices $.50 per meal, and I still project I will lose $250,000 this year, I have always been in the black. I worry now many people will not be able to pay the increased price for school lunches, and I will lose even more. I have no solutions. What can I do? How can you help us?

DR. KATHRYN STEWART,
*Food Service Supervisor, Franklin County Board of Education, Winchester, TN.*

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From: Abbie Byrom
Sent: Wed 6/11/2008 11:45 PM
To: Alexander, Senator
Subject: Gas Prices

My name is Abbie Byrom. I am a third year medical student at Quillen College of Medicine. Currently, we are able to get loans for cost of living based on a budget set by the State University system. During our third year of medical training, we rotate through the Johnson City Medical Center and hospitals in Kingsport and Bristol. For those of us who live in Johnson City, traveling to these other towns costs $250–500 a month (reported from classmates). This is not to mention the students in the rural tract who travel to rural towns such as Mountain City and Rogersville. The cost of gas and groceries has been overwhelming and our governed budget is not covering the costs (transportation allotment, which includes expected car maintenance, is approximately $283 per month). My classmates, with whom I have spoken about these issues, report that they rely upon credit cards to survive toward the end of the semester. Many of them pay off the credit cards when they receive their next loan check, which leaves them over budget once again at the end of the next semester.

On a personal note, my family lives in Tullahoma, TN. During my first year of medical school, I was unable to travel to Tullahoma as often as I would have liked due to a very busy schedule. Now the limiting factor is the cost of gasoline, and that's just sad. Please help me and my fellow colleagues make it through the semester without accruing more debt.

And, please help me see my family.

Sincerely,

ABBIE R. BYROM,
*Registered voter since 1999,*
*Johnson City, TN.*

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Sent: Wed 6/11/2008 6:03 PM
To: Alexander, Senator

DEAR SENATOR ALEXANDER: We run a concessions business just on the side (weekends) to help supplement our income. Other years this has helped us to achieve more than we could've with just our jobs. This year our costs have gone up astronomically, and sales

are down by more than half. People can't come to the events because of fuel prices!! It has resulted in us not having made one cent of profit yet this year!! It is discouraging to work hard and not get ahead at all. We do not believe that ''punishing'' (taxing) the oil companies will do any good; the companies will expense that cost and pass it right on to us and cut production! We must drill in our country and develop new technologies.

Thanks for giving us the opportunity for input.

Sincerely,

JERRY AND JUDY WILSON,
*Monterey, TN.*

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From: Josh Yarbrough
Sent: Thu 6/12/2008 10:09 PM
To: Alexander, Senator
Subject: Gas Prices/Drilling Efforts

DEAR SENATOR ALEXANDER: I appreciate your efforts to help Congress see how the American public is affected by high gasoline prices. My story is that I am married with 3 children. Four years ago, we moved to a larger house in the city of Franklin, TN from farther out of town. Of course, we purchased a home that stretched us a little, but we felt that after 4 or 5 years of living here, it would be like our first home—able to make extra payments due to increases in salary over the 5 year period. Last month, we spent $300 at the pump. So, what I'm seeing is that the gas prices are eating into money that I would either be able to save or put toward the house. Having this money available would help all Americans, not just those that over-extended themselves with the whole sub-prime mortgage/adjustable rate mortgage ''crisis''.

I applaud the Republicans' efforts to make it possible for Americans to drill for more oil in our own country. Certainly, I agree that researching other forms of energy is a good thing, but the fastest way to be independent of foreign oil is to act decisively now by allowing for more drilling in America. Further, I believe that the government should not be heavily involved in finding the alternative energy sources. I would much prefer to leave that to the private sector. Why should my tax dollars be used for this, when companies who seek profit are willing to do the research?

Again, thank you for standing firm in your support of drilling efforts in America! We are proud to have you representing us!

Sincerely,

JOSHUA L. YARBROUGH,
*Franklin, TN.*

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak as in morning business.

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

LARGE DEFENSE CONTRACT AWARDED TO AIRBUS

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, 3 months ago, our U.S. Air Force made a decision that is going to affect our military for decades. Our Air Force awarded one of the largest defense contracts in history to the European company Airbus.

As my colleagues know, I have been here many times to talk about my numerous concerns about this contract and about whether it is in the best interest of our taxpayers and our service men and women for Airbus to supply our next generation of aerial refueling tankers. Those tankers refuel planes and aircraft that are stationed across the world. As long as we, the United States, control the technology to build those refueling tankers, we control our skies and our own security. But the Pentagon has yet to justify this decision to give that contract to the European company Airbus.

Within the next 24 hours, we expect the Government Accountability Office to issue a ruling on one overarching question that has been raised about this contract and that is whether the Air Force followed the letter of the law when it made that decision. This GAO decision will not answer whether Airbus will supply the best plane for our military, and it will not answer whether buying the Airbus tanker would do permanent harm to our aerospace industry.

So I rise today to urge my colleagues to join with me and continue to fight to get those answers. It is common sense that before we, the Congress, finalize a $35 billion contract, we need to know why the Air Force chose a plane that is much bigger and less efficient than it asked for—one that cannot use hundreds of our runways, ramps, and hangars and one that costs billions of dollars more in fuel and maintenance.

We, as Members of Congress, and the people we represent need to know whether our Government should buy a plane that even the Air Force says is ''less survivable.'' That means it is less able to keep our men and women who are in them safe. We need to know what the effect on our economy will be and the effect on our national security if we turn this critical technology over to a company that is owned by a foreign government.

I was out on the Boeing 767 line the day the Air Force announced its decision. I will never forget the shock and dismay I saw on our workers' faces. After all, they have been making our Nation's refueling tankers now for more than 50 years, and they know how important those tankers are to the military. In fact, I remember so well this one woman rushing over to me on the factory floor to tell me her son actually flies those refueling tankers for the Air Force and that she—an American mom—wanted to be the one making them for him. She and workers across this country want to know why. Why would we give this contract, this Air Force contract, to a subsidized European company controlled by foreign governments that just want to put America's aerospace industry out of business and take away her job?

The U.S. Trade Representative is so concerned about the subsidies Airbus receives that it has brought a case against the EU before the World Trade Organization because of those illegal subsidies. We need to know why in the world we would accuse Airbus of unfair trade practices on one hand and then turn around and hand them a major piece of our defense industry. We, as Members of Congress and representatives of the American people, need to know why our Government would hand them this contract now.

In May, employers cut 49,000 jobs. It was the largest 1-month jump in unemployment in this country in 22 years. Yet at the same time our administration is sending 44,000 U.S. jobs overseas to build our Air Force refueling tankers, when we are hemorrhaging jobs at home in this country. It does not make sense to me.

Some of our colleagues are saying we need to move this process along quickly so we can get those planes into the hands of our airmen and airwomen. I agree. They need these planes. But this is a contract that will affect our military, it will affect our taxpayers, and it will affect our decisions in this country for years to come. So we had better be thoughtful, conscientious, and thorough. Members of Congress have a responsibility to thoroughly evaluate whether we are buying the best plane for our taxpayers and our men and women who fly those planes. So I hope my colleagues, as we hear from the GAO in the next 24 hours, will stand with me and ensure we get this contract right.

I see my colleague from Maryland is here to speak, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

MOVING FORWARD WITH ENERGY LEGISLATION

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, the people of Maryland and around the Nation are angry and frustrated. Every time they fill the tank of their vehicle with gasoline or look at their utility bills, they get worried. I must tell you, they are frustrated and so am I as to why the Republicans are blocking an opportunity for us to even take up this legislation to deal with the rising energy costs and to deal with the energy policies of this country.

Republicans have blocked consideration of S. 3044, the Consumer-First Energy Act, and H.R. 6049, the Energy and Tax Extenders Act containing renewable energy incentive programs. People in Maryland and around the Nation know that when George Bush took the office of President, the price of gasoline was $1.46 a gallon. It is now over $4 a gallon. They know the impact this is having on their lives. There are people in Maryland; in Pennsylvania, the State of the Presiding Officer; and around this Nation who literally cannot afford to fill their tanks with gasoline. They are having to make tough decisions today.

There are small businesses that are going out of business because they can't afford the increased energy cost of running their small businesses, and they do not have options as to how to shift costs in order to deal with these

rising costs without putting it onto the consumers. So this is having a dramatic impact on our economy.

The people of our Nation are asking us to put aside our partisan differences. This is too important a subject for the security of our country, for the economy of our Nation to continue partisan fighting. We need to debate these issues and vote on these issues.

I am proud to be a cosponsor of S. 3044, which provides some immediate help to our consumers on energy cost. It deals with a limited number of subjects, but they are subjects that can have an impact on energy costs now. It would repeal the tax subsidies that we give the oil industry—the tax subsidies. We are providing $17 billion of tax relief to the oil industries while they have record profits. Their profits are at record numbers.

President Bush said on April 14, 2005 that if the cost of crude was at $55 a barrel, the oil industry didn't need additional incentives. The President said: I will tell you, with $55-a-barrel oil, we don't need incentives to oil and gas companies to explore. There are plenty of incentives. That was the President of the United States. Well, the price of crude oil now is at $140 a barrel, so we certainly don't need to have taxpayers subsidizing the profits of the oil industry. This legislation says: Let's use that money to make America secure. Let's put it into renewable energy sources here in America.

The legislation would also allow the President to impose a windfall profits tax. I have heard a lot about that from my colleagues, but it simply says that if you are making obscene profits, you should pay some additional taxes. You could avoid the windfall profits tax. All you need to do is invest the profits in clean, affordable, and domestically produced renewable energy. In other words, invest in America's future and in America's security.

The legislation also goes after speculators. A large part of the cost at the pump today for gasoline is because we have investors speculating in oil futures, but they are not subject to the normal investment rules. They should have margin requirements to be able to speculate. We need energy, we need gasoline at the pump, we don't need it held by speculators, and this legislation would deal with that situation to help bring down the cost of gasoline.

It also deals with the collusive practices of the oil-supplying countries. Let's subject them, to the extent we can, to fair antitrust laws.

So this legislation would have an impact in trying to bring down the cost of gasoline today.

I know the President is going to make a statement saying we can drill our way out of this problem. We can't drill our way out of this problem. America has 3 percent of the world's reserves in oil, and we consume 25 percent. We can't drill our way out of it. ANWR, which is the sensitive land in Alaska the President wants us to drill in, contains .6 percent, less than 1 percent, of the world's reserves. We have millions of acres that are open for exploration and drilling today. The oil industry could use those millions of acres to obtain more energy, and it still wouldn't be enough to deal with our needs, but it would help us on a temporary basis. ANWR represents only a very small part of that.

There are plenty of ways in which we can drill today, but it would not solve our problems. Let me give you one comparison. If we had passed the increased energy efficiencies for our automobiles 20 years ago rather than last year, we would have energy savings in America equivalent to more than three times the amount of oil we could get from the ANWR reserves.

So in the short term, the bill we have before us is our best hope to bring down costs. It will help our consumers. But we do need an energy policy for America. We need to be energy secure, and H.R. 6049, of which the Republicans are blocking consideration, that deals with renewable energy, would help us obtain that. We need an energy policy in America that makes us secure from foreign imported oil. We have to be an energy-independent America. We have to produce our own energy in America so we can get off oil for the sake of our national security. We shouldn't be financing countries that disagree with our principles and our way of life. We need to be energy independent for our economy so we don't have these unpredictable changes in energy costs in America.

One of the most frustrating things for American business is they need to plan for their costs. They can't plan today because we don't control our own energy. So we have to be energy independent for the purposes of our economy, and we also need to be energy independent for the sake of our environment. Global climate change is real and so we have to get off oil.

So for all those reasons, we need to invest in renewable energy, we need to invest in better efficiencies, and H.R. 6049 allows us to move forward in doing that. Together we can enact legislation to help those frustrated Maryland consumers and drivers and those who live in Pennsylvania, the Presiding Officer's State, who are worried about whether they will be able to get to work with the rising cost of energy. We can help them today by putting aside our partisan differences and debating and voting on these issues.

This Nation can accomplish anything, if we set our minds to it. I know we have support on both sides of the aisle for an energy policy that makes us energy independent and secure. Let's deal with the immediate problems of the gasoline and energy costs, let's deal with a long-term energy policy that is in the best interest of this Nation, and let's start by debating these issues. Let's put aside the filibuster, move forward, bring these bills to the floor of the Senate so we can do what Americans expect us to do—debate and act on this critical issue to the future of our country.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

OIL PRICES AND EXPLORATION

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, gas prices this summer could easily be triple what they were when President Bush took office. The dramatic increase in oil prices brought prices for food up along with it, and families are facing a painful financial choice when it comes time to fill their gas tank: Put a gallon of gas in the car or put a gallon of milk on the kitchen table. When Americans are paying this much to fill their gas tanks, it is a drain on the whole economy. Businesses are cutting jobs, families have already eliminated nonessentials, and many are now cutting back on meals. Some people are even contemplating changing their job because they can't afford the gas to get to work.

It has become painfully clear that we are in an oil crisis. Some of the forces driving up prices are beyond immediate control—such as the demand from China and India. But some of the factors offer opportunities for action.

First, market experts have testified before Congress that speculators are driving up prices far beyond where the natural forces of supply and demand should take them. Second, we can take steps in this country to reduce our demand and our dependence on foreign oil.

Last week in the Senate, Democrats brought legislation forward that would attack some of the root causes of the skyrocketing price of oil, cut down gas prices that are artificially high, and bring relief to drivers at the pump. That bill, the Consumer-First Energy Act, would have provided that relief by, among other things, ensuring that our commodities markets are functioning fairly so prices can come down from their artificial highs. The supply-and-demand equation is roughly the same as it was 2 years ago. Yet we have seen prices go through the roof. Experts say speculation could be adding anywhere between $50 and $80 a barrel to the price of oil.

In some respects, I am not surprised this is the one place in the market that doesn't seem to be regulated. We can see what happened under the administration of a President and Vice President whose politics have always been tied up with the oil companies for whom they used to work. Here you have the price of a barrel of oil that has risen from about $20 a barrel when President Bush took office to about $140 a barrel right now.

As we have seen that price rise, what happens? As the price of oil has risen, the profits of big oil companies have risen—from about $20 billion when President Bush took office to about $120 billion right now. The price of oil goes up and profits go up as well. And as the profits have risen for big oil, the price of gas that we pay at the pump has risen—from under $1.50 a gallon when President Bush took office, in many cases, to, in some cases, over $4 per gallon right now.

The Consumer-First Energy Act would have made sure that oil is traded on a well-regulated, transparent market free from manipulation. But my colleagues on the Republican side of the aisle said no to that legislation. They said no to the American consumer because they obviously feel committed to say yes to big oil.

Yesterday, once again, the Senate had the chance to help free our country from the liquid shackles of foreign oil. The Baucus substitute amendment—had we been able to offer it, had we not been stopped by our Republican colleagues—would have spurred the development of renewable energy by providing almost $20 billion in tax incentives for investment in the production, transportation, and conservation of energy.

In order to encourage renewable energy industries to build to the scale we need them to, we have to send renewable producers the clear message that their product will have continued support in the future. So the bill would have extended investment tax credits for 6 years to ensure the continued development of solar energy, fuel cells, and microturbines, among others.

We have seen how important this is in my home State of New Jersey where the solar industry has created thousands of jobs and helped ''green'' the Garden State.

The bill would have encouraged the production of cellulosic biofuels, including cellulosic ethanol. It would have encouraged the development and use of biodiesel and renewable diesel, encouraged further investments in advanced technology vehicles, and created a tax credit for alternative refueling stations so that the infrastructure exists in our country to make those vehicles viable.

So in the face of a broad-based package to encourage new green energy sources that would have helped bring down gas prices and end our dependence on foreign oil, what did my colleagues on the Republican side of the aisle say? They said no again. Republicans said no to helping American consumers because they could not help but say yes to big oil.

It is no surprise then when my distinguished colleague from Arizona, Senator MCCAIN, delivered his big energy speech yesterday, where did he do it? He did it in the oil capital of the United States. The big plan President Bush and his Republican allies in Congress are pushing is another example of big oil writing our energy policy, as they have done for the last 8 years.

And Senator MCCAIN repeats it. That plan comes down to one thing: Drilling, drilling, drilling along the coasts of our country. When JOHN MCCAIN or George Bush talk about opening our coastline to drilling, they make it sound like gasoline is going to gush out from that drill straight out of the ground and right into your car.

What they either do not want to tell the public or simply ignore is that, in fact, it will take at least a decade—a decade—to see any production out of these areas, and even then, the Energy Information Department tells us this will be a drop in the bucket.

Why give the oil companies another handout when they are sitting on 68 million acres of land leased from the American people which they have yet to explore? I find it hard to believe that Senator MCCAIN would say the Federal Government discourages offshore oil production when more than 80 percent of the oil that is offshore is already open for production, and oil companies own more than 30 million acres of leases in Federal waters they have not used—that they have not used.

The vast majority of oil and natural gas resources on Federal land is already open for drilling, and it is not being tapped. Currently, oil companies are not producing oil or gas on 68 million of the more than 91 million acres of Federal land under their control. And 31 million of those 68 million acres are offshore.

Offshore, these companies are producing on only about 20 percent of the acres they hold, while onshore they are producing less than 30 percent of the acres they hold. So one has to wonder, when big oil pushes relentlessly for more and more land and water to drill, even when they have millions of acres they have yet to use, it makes us wonder if they are not just exploiting this oil crisis to expand the reserves on their books in order to inflate their share price. Certainly, the needs of American consumers are not what these CEOs are looking out for.

If the Senate does not act now, billions of dollars' worth of research and development tax credits will expire, impeding innovation and discovery. As the world becomes increasingly globalized and technology driven, we must increase our investments in research and development in order to maintain our position as a world leader in the 21st century.

If the Senate does not act, billions of dollars invested in alternative, clean sources of energy will cease, and so will our progress to become energy independent. I have heard my colleagues on the other side of the aisle decry the rising price of gas and talk about developing alternative sources of energy.

But when they had the opportunity yesterday, once again they said no, as they said no last week on having market speculation taken out of the price of oil, therefore the price of gas.

By the way, what would have been offered yesterday had we been able to proceed—and hopefully we can proceed on today—is that millions of Americans subject to the alternative minimum tax, placing unfair and unnecessary tax increases on middle-class families, could have gotten a break under the Baucus substitute. That is all that would have been able to happen.

Finally, here is the bigger picture. We have 2 percent of this world's oil reserves, and we consume 25 percent of the world's oil. We are never going to meet growing domestic demand with shrinking domestic supply. The only way to make these numbers balance is to reduce our dependence on oil by increasing production of renewable fuels.

If we are going to have a secure energy future, there is a lot more we need to do to explore besides oil reserves. We had better start exploring the outer reaches of our creativity, not lining the inner pockets of the corporate oil elite. It is time to say yes to tapping our industriousness, harnessing our powers of innovation, and summoning up the will to change, that change that has made this country great.

We have an opportunity to break our dependence. We have an opportunity to tell the oil companies, too, by the way: Pursue the 68 million acres of land and water you already have licenses and leases for and stop telling us to go potentially risk our environmentally sensitive areas in pursuit of oil that will not be achieved for a decade, will not do anything about gas prices today, when you are not even moving on the 68 million acres to which you already have access. Ultimately, all it would do is increase your profits, but it would cause States, such as my State of New Jersey, where tourism is the second largest driver of its economy, to risk the possibility of an oil spill on the shores of New Jersey's beaches and kill billions of dollars that annually are generated as a result of that.

So I do not want to hear from the capital of big oil, our dear colleague and the presumptive Republican nominee tell us the solution to our problem is to drill more, when 68 million acres that the big oil companies have are already not being pursued, when ultimately it will not produce a penny of reduction in gas prices.

When we had the opportunity to make a real impact last week on the bill that would take the speculation out of the marketplace, stop price gouging, and at the same time, when we have an opportunity today, before the Senate, to make sure that we extend those renewable tax credits, give us better fuel-efficient vehicles, give us better renewable energy sources, and break our addiction to the reality that the reality is that the overwhelming part of oil in this world resides not here in the United States but abroad.

That is our challenge and opportunity. It is time to say yes to American consumers, time to say no to big oil.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia is recognized.

(The remarks of Mr. WARNER and Mr. WEBB pertaining to the introduction of S. 3147 are printed in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

Mr. WARNER. I yield the floor.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

(The remarks of Mr. WYDEN pertaining to the introduction of S. 3148 and S. 3149 are located in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

MOUNT HOOD WILDERNESS

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I wish to acknowledge the important work of my Oregon colleagues—Representatives DEFAZIO, HOOLEY, BLUMENAUER, and WU—who are coming through today for an Oregon icon, our special Mount Hood. Last year, Senator SMITH and I introduced the Lewis and Clark Mount Hood Wilderness Act to create an additional 128,000 acres of wilderness around the mountain. Our Mount Hood legislation has passed committee, and I am confident that now, with the House of Representatives, the other body, going forward with a companion measure, it is going to be possible to get this measure enacted and move on to a host of additional important land issues for my home State.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senator from Alaska.

OIL SPECULATION

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, as Americans travel with families over the Fourth of July and for summer vacations—on cruises, RV trips, or on sightseeing tours, to Alaska, hopefully—they are going to be shocked by the price of fuel at the pump. This is because the consumers of fuel—from airlines to truckers to the fishing captains of the boats off the Pacific in my State—must in effect bid against speculators in the oil markets, speculators who will never take delivery of fuel but bid up the price and turn it into an inflated profit. Some people will be forced to cancel summer plans—or worse, close their businesses—primarily because fuel costs have increased so much.

Today, the average price of a gallon of gas is $4.08. In some parts of our State of Alaska, the price of a gallon of gas is over $8. I believe Congress must take action now to address this issue before Americans can no longer afford even basic activities and the goods they need.

Most foreign producers believe Americans will pay any price for oil, and Congress validates this each day we fail to implement a comprehensive energy strategy. Americans are being taken advantage of not only by OPEC but by speculators right here in our own country who are exempt from regulation by the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. Historically, this has not been a bad problem. Only recently has speculation reached these unsustainable levels.

Some speculation when oil consumers use oil futures is bona fide. For instance, an airline might buy fuel at an advanced price for delivery in the future to make certain that it has a supply in the future. That is legitimate. There is no problem with brokers facilitating even this type of purchase. But Congress must recognize that speculators who are not consumers of oil have taken control of our market. Ultimately, the price Americans must pay for oil and other fuels skyrockets because of their speculation. Even major institutional investors have taken up oil futures markets as a major asset class in their financial portfolios. In the last 5 years, investments in commodity index funds have jumped from $13 billion to $260 billion due in large part to oil futures. Let me repeat that. Investments in the commodity index funds jumped from $13 billion to $260 billion due in large part to oil futures.

Excessive speculation in oil futures is causing our economy to continue its decline. Congress must mandate the CFTC to stringently regulate these exchanges.

Let me show this chart, Mr. President. This shows the period from 1986 through 2007. The gold marks on the chart are actual trade volumes of oil futures in NYMEX and red is the price of the oil that was paid on those deliveries. It is easy to see that as these spikes have occurred, they have not been related to the delivery of oil, they have been related to the price of oil—just speculation in terms of the future delivery of our oil. One economist told me that 30 to 35 percent of what we pay at the pump for gasoline today is caused by speculation—these so-called investors. I call them speculators, and I think they all ought to be in jail. This is a terrible situation, actually.

Our oil crisis has combined with our economic instability and excessive oil speculation to become a vicious cycle. As energy prices continue to cripple our economy, inflation rises and the dollar weakens. One of the few places that investors see a safe bet is in the energy market. They know that worldwide oil demand is increasing and will continue to increase, and so they bid higher and higher for speculative purposes on the delivery of that oil to our own country.

Three weeks ago, I stated on the floor that the IEA predicted world oil demand to increase from 85 million barrels a day to 116 million barrels a day. If that is the future of oil, of course the investors want to increase their position in oil futures. Who wouldn't want to do that, particularly when there is no control over them at all on how much they can raise the price just by trading paper that represents future delivery of oil?

I believe that immediately the CFTC needs to conduct a review to examine where unregulated trading in oil futures has adversely affected the market—the price we pay at the pump—and to determine what regulations need to be adjusted. I would also like to have full disclosure from any entity or person taking part in the oil speculation game so that the American people can see who is buying and selling their energy but never even hoping to accept delivery. They are just buying pieces of paper to represent the future delivery of oil and they are speculating and raising the price to the entity that needs the oil in the future.

There should be a limit on the extent to which investors in petroleum futures can increase their positions in this important commodity market. It should be a crime when spectators knowingly manipulate oil prices and drive up the price of fuel at the expense of the American family. Such actions undermine our country's energy stability and our energy security. American consumers are at the mercy of foreign oil sellers and domestic oil buyers already, and they should not be forced to pay so much more because of speculation.

Last year, the Senator from California, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and I each crossed party lines, to a certain extent, to get together to pass a change in the CAFE standards. That was the first Federal increase in vehicle fuel efficiency in three decades. Senator FEINSTEIN has been a champion of conservation, and I applaud her.

Now we are working together again, on S. 3131. Under the terms of this bill, the CFTC will be required to identify and crack down on the oil commodity futures markets that have spun out of control. This may involve the New York Mercantile Exchange, the Intercontinental Exchange—so-called ICE—and even foreign markets, if necessary, to address this serious problem. Our bill probably needs to be improved to make it even more certain that speculators in oil futures will be charged with a serious crime, and they should have serious penalties.

The time is now to act against speculators. I hope the Senate will lead in this and try to crack down on speculators. I predict that if we do, we can break this bubble. If we can reduce the price by at least 30 percent by prosecuting the speculators, I think we should do it, and we should do it before we go home next week.

Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senator from Tennessee is recognized.

THE FINANCIAL CONSUMER HOTLINE

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about a bill that is being introduced in this body by Senator SCHUMER and myself that is designed to help people throughout our country who are having tremendous difficulties navigating the various financial institutions and who they should talk to when they have various complaints. Right now there are five different institutions of Government that oversee financial institutions throughout our country. I am on the Banking Committee, and I will tell you that if I had a complaint or something I wanted to ask about a financial institution in the State of Tennessee, I would have no idea who I should call in regard to that particular institution. It is not known to the public generally whether institutions are governed by State charter or governed by Federal charter or by which Federal charter they might be governed.

We have introduced a bill called the Financial Consumer Hotline. What this will allow people throughout the country to do is to dial a toll-free number and someone on the other end of that toll-free number would direct that call immediately to the right place. Right now, the FDIC has to redirect 54 percent of the calls it receives to other entities. You can imagine, if you are a consumer in Tennessee or a consumer in Maryland or a consumer in Virginia, how frustrating that would be, to have an issue and to have to take time, if you will, to find out about that issue and to not know who to call.

When I was mayor of the city of Chattanooga, we had a similar problem in that people did not know how to access city government regarding the myriad of issues with which they had to deal. They did not know which department of government to contact. We realized that and established something called a 311 number. Cities all across the country have done the same thing. What that has done is allow people to dial one number and call in about any issue and have that registered and know that is going to be dealt with.

I certainly appreciate the tremendous partnership we have established on this issue with Senator SCHUMER from New York, who also serves on the Banking Committee and is also aware of the tremendous complications people go through in trying to get to the bottom of whatever issue it is.

This bill has been introduced. I hope my colleagues in the Senate will consider this legislation. It is something that, by the way, does not cost the taxpayers of this country a dime. There is an entity that is directed through regulatory bodies to do this. This is something that does not come out of the taxpayers' pocket. It does not come out of our Treasury. I think it will enhance the ability of people throughout our country to navigate and get to the bottom of issues they might have with financial institutions.

I notice no one here wishing to speak, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CARDIN). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

ENERGY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, if you travel into Maryland or Illinois or anywhere across America and ask people what is on your mind, they are going to tell you it is gasoline prices. Why? Because they have to fill the tank each week and cannot believe how much they are paying with the credit cards and cash in their wallet going out in record amounts to fill their cars and trucks and try to get on with their daily lives.

Then you go driving down any street in America, there is that big sign right in your face: $4.08, $4.25. It is a constant reminder of the problems we face. We have tried, on the Democratic side, to move some legislation to deal with this situation. We tried last week to deal with the energy security bill that would have found a way, we think, to start creating an environment to bring down these prices.

It was an effort that most people agree is long overdue. There is a $17 billion subsidy to the oil industry. Why would you do that when this industry is recording record profits, not just for their industry but for any American business?

We have also tried to deal with energy tax incentives for wind power and solar power and things that are the source of power and energy for America's economy in the future. Twice now, not once but twice, the Republicans have refused to join us in even bringing these measures to the floor. They keep stopping us cold.

The Senate's 51 Democrats and 41 Republicans, with absences, with a 60-vote requirement for most major legislation, is within the power of the Republicans to stop debate. They have done it repeatedly.

There is also a concern across America because the response from the Republican side, not just from our colleagues in the Senate but from Senator MCCAIN as well as the President, has been to call on us to drill our way out of this problem.

I am afraid people who suggest we can drill for more oil in America and take care of our problems do not understand basic math. The United States uses 25 percent of the world's oil supply; we are big users for a big economy. Do you know what we have in oil reserves out of all the known oil reserves in the world? We have 3 percent, 3 percent of the reserves and 25 percent of the usage. You cannot drill your way out of the situation.

They do not understand as well that currently there are Federal lands available for drilling that are not being put into production; lands that have already been leased by oil companies. These are lands owned by the people of the United States, and the right to drill for oil and gas has been leased to a private company that sits on it and does nothing.

You say to yourself: Well, it cannot be too much because we need oil, it is so valuable these days. Oil and gas companies—let me show this chart—hold leases to nearly 68 million acres of Federal land that are not producing oil.

This land could produce 4.8 million barrels of oil every day. That is six times the peak production of any drilling in Alaska for the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Every time you ask a Republican what is the problem, they say: Man, if we could drill in Alaska, everything would be just fine. Do you know how many acres are in Alaska? There are 1.5 million. The oil companies are sitting on leases for 68 million acres now that they are not drilling.

If they did not think they were valuable, they would not have bought the leases. But they did. They wait year after year, sitting on these leases and keep throwing in our face: Alaska, Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, not telling us it would take 8 to 10 years to bring the first barrel of crude oil out of Alaska, and it would have a minimal impact on the price of gasoline.

Let me show you some charts which kind of tell the story about these 68 million acres in more graphic terms. There are 68 million acres leased to oil companies. These are offshore, 33.5 million leased acres unused offshore; 34.5 million leased acres unused onshore.

Take a look at the Gulf of Mexico region. I know it is hard to pick this up in my presentation. But the red areas are areas currently under lease that are not producing oil and gas, owned by the Federal Government, leased to private oil companies, and not in production.

The blue dots are in production. Look at all the opportunity. So when the President has a press conference, or Senator MCCAIN has a press conference, and says: We need to have offshore drilling, the obvious question, Senator, Mr. President, is: What about all these lands, 68 million acres of which are under lease right now for drilling and not being used?

Take a look at this as well. I see Senator DODD has arrived on the floor. He has been one of the proponents of this particular point of view. I thank him for this. He is welcome to take a look at the charts and use them at any time in the future.

Here are 34.5 million acres leased to companies on the onshore site. Look at the Western part of the United States. All this red area is Federal land currently leased to oil companies for production not in production. Now take a look at Alaska, 1.5 million acres. That is what they cannot wait to get into.

The honest answer is the oil companies have opportunities now to produce

more oil and gas. It is time for us to stop hearing the excuses. We have to look to the reality. The reality is the oil companies are making profits at recordbreaking levels. The reality is speculation is driving up the price of oil, and the reality is the President of the United States has yet to call the oil company executives into the Oval Office to tell them they are wrecking the economy.

He has yet to call them in and say: For goodness sakes, start drilling on the land you already lease from the Federal Government. Instead, it is always the next horizon—if we could just get into Alaska, if we could just get into the Outer Continental Shelf.

We shouldn't have to compromise our health or our environment to make sure our economy is strong.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, time has expired.

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent to continue for 5 minutes in morning business and that time not be deducted from the already reserved morning business of 2 hours on each side.

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

Mr. DURBIN. Have no doubt, drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge isn't going to have a dramatic impact when it comes to the world's supply of oil. Even the Department of Energy's Energy Information Administration admits that. By the time the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge would be at peak production, which wouldn't take place until the year 2030, 22 years from now, refuge oil would make up only six-tenths of 1 percent of the world's oil. If one listens to some of the political rhetoric, they would think there is this vast resource of oil in Alaska that is going to come to our rescue. It is not. It is a drop in the bucket when we consider today's high gasoline prices. In fact, the effect at the gas pump wouldn't be felt for over 20 years, and then it is only pennies a gallon.

The Arctic Wildlife Refuge is one of America's last pristine, untouched areas. It is home to more than 200 wildlife species, including polar bears, musk ox, and caribou. President Dwight Eisenhower set this area aside over 50 years ago and said: This is something we need to preserve. This is a once-in-a-lifetime-and-beyond opportunity to protect some treasure for future generations.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Will the Senator from Illinois yield for a question?

Mr. DURBIN. I am happy to yield.

Ms. MIKULSKI. I have been listening to the Senator's statement. Today I understand the President wants to lift bans on drilling; is that correct?

Mr. DURBIN. That is my understanding.

Ms. MIKULSKI. I missed part of the Senator's statement. Don't the massive oil companies already have substantial acreage they could start drilling on right now?

Mr. DURBIN. The Senator from Maryland is correct. There is 68 million acres currently under lease to oil companies, Federal land owned by the people for which oil companies are paying money each year for the right to drill for oil, 68 million acres and no drilling taking place. So when the President announces: We just have to find more Federal land to drill on, the obvious question is, why aren't they drilling on the 68 million acres offshore and onshore they currently have under lease?

Ms. MIKULSKI. I find that shocking. I note that the 68 million acres is about six ANWRs.

Mr. DURBIN. If we consider the 1.5 million acres on which they want to drill in ANWR, it is 50 times.

Ms. MIKULSKI. That is not fuzzy math.

Mr. DURBIN. That is not fuzzy math. This 68 million acres would be the size of my home State of Illinois and its adjoining State of Indiana together. That is how much they currently have under lease to drill for oil that they are not touching.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Does the Senator agree, rather than change policies to prevent gouging of consumers and speculation in the market, they would rather change the subject?

Mr. DURBIN. That is clearly what they are doing. Anyone who has had a crying baby knows what a pacifier is. You try to get the pacifier in the baby's mouth so they will calm down. They may still be hungry or crying for some other reason, but you try to quiet them down. That is what we are hearing in response.

When people say drill in Alaska or drill offshore, they want to quiet us down because when we look at the numbers, the numbers do not compute. If we are going to be honest about energy sources, there is a limit to how much we can drill in territory controlled by America. There is much more we have to do to lessen our dependence on foreign oil. We are talking about domestic sources—ethanol, biofuels, diesel. We are talking about renewable and sustainable sources of energy such as wind power and solar power that would not destroy the planet with global warming. That is the big challenge.

Sadly, for 7½ years, this administration has ignored it. Now we are in a terrible situation. I wish this President would show leadership and bring in the oil company executives, sit them down in the White House, and tell them they can't keep demanding these high profits at the expense of American families and businesses. Tell them to start drilling on lands they are currently leasing; try to challenge America to move forward in a fair way to have affordable energy.

I am glad the Senator from Maryland joined me in this conversation. I know she has an important agenda she will initiate now.

I yield the floor.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I rise today to speak in favor of legislation that I think will help to address some of the most important challenges facing our Nation's economy today. The Renewable Energy and Job Creation Act of 2008 is a critical step toward forever breaking the crippling hold that foreign oil has on our Nation. It will provide American entrepreneurs with incentives to develop new, environmentally safe energy technologies and create jobs that will stay in the United States, while strengthening all our communities. The bill will also provide important tax breaks for middle and lower income families at a time when the economic pressures on them are enormous.

To be sure, Americans are waking up to bad news about the economy each and every day. For months now we have watched as prices for gas and food have climbed. We have witnessed a foreclosure crisis that has ravaged our economy, and put 7,000 to 8,000 Americans in danger of losing their homes each day to say nothing of the 15,000–16,000 Americans who become neighbors to homes in foreclosure. As if this did not paint a dismal enough picture, since January of this year the American labor market has hemorrhaged more than 324,000 jobs and the number of people seeking unemployment benefits has hit 8.5 million.

The time has come to change how our economy operates—and that starts with what our economy largely runs on. The time has come to end our dependence on oil.

Each day new energy technologies are being developed and advanced, and these technologies need help to grow and become viable, cost-effective alternatives to oil. For nearly a century, technological innovation and the intellectual capital of our industries have been the engine driving American prosperity. But this administration's repeated quest to open more of Alaska and more of Florida's coast to drilling comes at a high price indeed—not only at the cost of our environment but also long-term economic stability.

By extending tax provisions such as the research and development tax credit, the solar energy and fuel cell investment tax credit and the renewable energy production tax credit, we make a bold statement to the world. We would be saying that the United States is dead serious about clean, sustainable, energy independence.

The State of Connecticut is home to firms who are at the cutting edge of wind and solar energy development. These firms are creating new jobs, in emerging industries, that will be serving all Americans—jobs that cannot and will not be outsourced, like so many have been under the Bush tax regime.

Of course, this bill provides so much more than energy tax breaks. It also extends the child tax credit, the qualified tuition deduction and other provisions that help lower and middle-income families make ends meet, and afford higher education costs. According to the Joint Economic Committee,

from 2000–2007 the median household income in Connecticut has increased by a mere 1 percent. Meanwhile, the cost of a gallon of gasoline in our State consistently tops the national average, and the cost of going to college in the State has risen by 29.1 percent since 1999.

For Connecticut, the need to act is clear. And with this bill, we are.

This legislation is paid for. The cost of these tax provisions will not, as the Bush tax cuts of 2001 and 2003 did, merely pass the cost on to our children and grandchildren. This bill provides crucial incentives for job creation, as well as middle-class tax relief, but it also pays for these benefits. It does so by changing the tax rules for executive compensation, and delays a rule that would provide incentives to firms operating abroad. And so not only do we hope to offset some of the economic ills that America is currently struggling with, this legislation also offers a big step toward restoring fiscal responsibility to our government, which this administration has utterly abandoned.

Now, our colleagues on the other side of the aisle are opposed to this fiscally responsible legislation for no other reason than that they are opposed to paying for tax breaks—opposed to the belief that future generations should not be stuck with our bill.

I see it differently—as does the business community of our Nation which supports these offsets for a simple reason:

Because they recognize the benefits that this legislation will provide not just to their bottom lines but to our economy.

Unfortunately, some in this body remain unconvinced—unconvinced that these tax provisions will spur new job creation, move us further towards energy independence, and restart our economy.

On June 9, a consortium of more than 300 different American businesses signed a letter to Chairman BAUCUS and Ranking Member GRASSLEY urging the Senate to work together in a bipartisan manner to pass this bill. These businesses represent some of the largest employers in our Nation, and at this moment the partisan paralysis that is affecting this body has put them in an awkward position. Many of these provisions are set to expire in December, and now is the time many of these employers are working to plan ahead and solidify new contracts, and sign new employees. They are making decisions about their futures. A recent study estimated that if we do not extend the tax provisions in this bill, we will not only lose $19 billion in clean energy investment, but also 116,000 potential green jobs.

It is time for us to recognize that to get our economy back on track, we must lead. We must make critical decisions about the future of our Nation. And above all, we must put politics aside and work on behalf of not our political parties but the American people. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this critically important legislation.

## MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to a period of morning business for up to 2 hours, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the majority controlling the first hour and the Republicans controlling the next hour.

The Senator from Maryland.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following Senators be permitted to speak for up to 5 minutes: Myself, MCCASKILL, FEINSTEIN, LANDRIEU, MURRAY, BOXER, STABENOW, KLOBUCHAR, and LINCOLN.

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

## CHECKLIST FOR CHANGE

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I take the floor today as the dean of the Democratic women in the Senate. I say to my colleagues and to all who are watching: We women are mad as hell, and we don't want to take it anymore. We are mad that in this institution, when all is said and done, more gets said than gets done.

We are here today, united as Democratic women, to be a voice, a voice for change. We have a checklist for change we think we can do before this Congress adjourns.

These are issues that focus on the big picture of what our country is facing, but they also focus on the impact these issues have on families. We look at macroissues that affect the world and the macaroni-and-cheese issues that affect families.

In order to get things done, women have checklists in their daily lives—whether it is to get the laundry done or pick the kids up from school. We have a checklist on what we want to do in terms of a legislative agenda. This is not about gender; it is about an agenda. We invite the good men of the Senate to join us, and we hope that people from the other side will join us. We want to work to bring about change, and we start with wanting to end the gridlock.

Look at these issues for which we stand. We want to provide equal pay for equal work, good jobs that stay in the United States, we want to make health care affordable, we want to take care of our military families and veterans. If they fought over there, they should have a safety net back here. We also want to restore America's credibility in the world, protect our environment. We are looking out for gas, and we are looking out for groceries. We want to make sure there is another FEMA. And, along the way, we protect the family checkbook. We want to make sure we get rid of the boondoggles that are eating up our Federal budget.

For me, I am the leadoff. But every woman here has an issue to which she will be speaking. What do I want to speak to? I want to speak to equal pay for equal work.

Members might recall a few weeks ago we brought legislation to the floor to correct the gap in wage discrimination law. We lost that, but I said when the vote was over: The issue is not gone. I called upon the women to put their lipstick on, square their shoulders, suit up, and fight for an American revolution. This is why we are here today. This is another salvo.

Many people think, wage discrimination, didn't we solve that? No. Wage discrimination still exists. Women are earning just 77 cents for every dollar our male counterparts make. We can see this now in the famous Ledbetter v. Goodyear case. Lilly Ledbetter, a hardworking woman, challenged the system. She didn't find out until years later that she was being paid less than her male counterparts. She took it to the EEOC. The corporation fought her every step of the way. It ended up in the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court made an outrageous decision. They said she waited too long to file her complaint. The Court also said she didn't do it in time.

We think it is about time we change the law. What we want to do is bring back the Lilly Ledbetter legislation called the Fair Pay Restoration Act. We want to bring it back up for a vote because equal pay for equal work is about fairness. It is about justice. It is about respect. It is going to close the loophole on the so-called statute of limitations on when one can file a wage discrimination case. We believe the current practice has been a good one, but we disagree with the Supreme Court.

We are going to bring it back up for a vote. We ask our colleagues to join us. We don't want our agenda to die in parliamentary entanglements. What we want to do is untangle this law and make sure women get equal pay and experience it in their personal checkbook, and we have to change the Federal lawbook.

We are ready. We are suited up. We have signed up. Join with us. We know the Presiding Officer is one of the great guys in the Senate who supports us. Before we go out at the end of this session, let's bring about change. Let's make America proud of their Congress. Let's turn the page.

I yield the floor to my new but very able and experienced colleague from Missouri, who has been fighting boondoggles in that Federal checkbook.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri is recognized.

Mrs. MCCASKILL. Mr. President, the United States is so lucky to have the senior Senator from Maryland in this august body. She is smart and feisty, and she is not willing to yield any