

And that is what I want to talk about today.

I see enormous potential in reducing our Nation's energy consumption by simply investing in energy efficiency, especially through renovating existing buildings. Renovating our existing buildings is a tremendous opportunity for us to cut energy use, save money and create jobs.

According to the Energy Information Administration, buildings account for more than 48 percent of total energy consumption in the United States. That is more than the transportation sector and more than the industrial sector. More than 70 percent of the commercial buildings in this country are older than 20 years and these buildings are significantly less efficient than buildings built today. Improvements to these types of buildings can improve efficiency by 20 to 40 percent using widely available technologies and the payback period can be as little 5 years.

Updating buildings with modern energy efficiency technologies not only saves money on energy costs, it also creates jobs. Jobs in the construction industry. Jobs in the manufacturing industry. Jobs in the retail sector of the economy. These jobs can't be outsourced and they are jobs that can serve as an important part of our clean, alternative energy economy.

Yet despite all this potential, there is actually very little of this energy efficient renovation taking place because of the financial barriers. Lenders typically will not accept projected energy savings—even if guaranteed by an energy services company as sufficient collateral.

That's why I am working with Chairman BINGAMAN and Ranking Member MURKOWSKI to use the DOE loan guarantee program to help unlock private capital and encourage investment in building retrofit projects and programs.

I am also working with Senator MARY LANDRIEU to develop legislation to further expand the DOE loan guarantee program to cover large building in the commercial sector, in schools and universities, and hospitals so that they can also be renovated to be more energy efficient.

There is so much potential that exists here and I think we need to put existing programs to work, like the loan guarantee program, to unlock private capital and reap the benefits that will come from making these buildings more energy efficient.

We have the opportunity to create jobs, support our continued economic recovery and save money by making these investments in energy efficiency.

While it is unfortunate that we could not get the amendment added to the supplemental appropriations bill, I look forward to working with my colleagues to pass this important provision this year.

HAITI

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, it has been more than 4 months since an earthquake struck Haiti, devastating not only its citizens, but also the support infrastructure—government, NGO and international—that is critical in responding to such emergencies. The U.S. and the international community rallied to Haiti's aid. Americans put their concerns to action, whether by writing to elected officials in support of greater assistance to Haiti, as so many of my constituents have done, or by contributing their own time and resources. Although it might seem to the people of Haiti, that along with the original flurry of media attention, the support of the American people has now dissipated, this is not the case.

I continue to hear regularly from the people of Wisconsin, who write not only to express their thoughts and prayers for the Haitian people, but who also request that their government do everything in its power to provide continuously needed relief and to encourage close collaboration with the Haitian people to support long-term recovery and rebuilding efforts. I was pleased to support Senator KERRY's Haiti Empowerment, Assistance, and Rebuilding Act of 2010, as amended, out of committee earlier this week and appreciate the signal it sends about our ongoing dedication to helping the people of Haiti get back on their feet in this time of great need.

While we work towards recovery and reconstruction, we must not lose focus on the immediate needs of the Haitian people—who remain in a suspended state of normalcy. More than 1 million people reside in camps, both official and informal, for the displaced. Major challenges remain in the areas of drainage, sanitation, food distribution, water, and coordination. Communicable diseases such as tetanus, malaria, and typhoid are on the rise. I especially share the concerns my constituents have raised about physical security for vulnerable populations, particularly women and children, who have suffered unacceptably from sexual violence, as well as for the disabled. Such populations are often the most severely affected by a lack of security and difficulties in accessing resources.

I am encouraged to see funding for many of these issues and areas in the supplemental request, but, as always, the devil is in the details. We must make sure our effort to provide timely and expedited assistance is not done at the expense of doing it right. We must make sure we are coordinating with all actors working in Haiti, including the Haitian government, international donors and organizations and the people of Haiti themselves. We can better understand the needs of the Haitian people and ensure we are addressing them effectively if we make sure to incorporate their voices into the planning process. To overlook the voices of the very individuals who are experiencing such devastation would be a severe in-

justice and yet it appears we may be doing just that.

I am troubled by reports from Haitian civil society of the obstacles to their full participation. We must not ignore the invaluable experience and insight of leaders on the ground by favoring large international NGOs over smaller grassroots organizations. We must make sure all relevant actors are at the table as we seek to implement a pragmatic and efficient plan for recovery. As Senator KERRY's bill notes, "when the people and other civil society actors in an affected country play a significant role in the design and execution of the rebuilding efforts, the efforts are often more sustainable and more in line with the needs and aspirations of local populations." We must therefore facilitate the participation of civil society and the Haitian people as well as their collaboration with the international community and their government as we continue relief and transition to recovery and rebuilding.

The damage done by the January 12 earthquake was all the more destructive because Haiti, the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, was still recovering from the devastating hurricane season of 2008, and still struggling with poverty and stability. Prior to the earthquake, the U.N. and the U.S. Government, along with many domestic and international partners, had been working alongside the Haitian people to strengthen their country. Now more than ever, we must redouble our efforts to ensure that priorities and needs do not go unmet and that in relief and recovery we give the Haitian people, and through them our own citizens and constituents, the biggest possible returns.

GULF OF MEXICO FISHERIES

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I filed two amendments to the emergency supplemental bill that focused on the desperate need for gulf fisheries data in the wake of the Deepwater Horizon spill.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration knows our oceans and has responsibilities under several Federal laws to analyze the impacts of oil and gas production on sea life. My first amendment would have added \$22 million in funding to support baseline environmental monitoring and assessments of the Gulf of Mexico's fisheries. \$5 million of that funding would have gone to cooperative research grants that would have allowed fishermen to get out on the water and help collect this data.

These funds are needed so that NOAA can do this valuable research throughout the gulf before the oil hits and then again while the spill moves. Like my colleague from New Jersey, Senator LAUTENBERG, I am committed to ensuring that those responsible bear the costs of this incident. And so my amendment would have required that