call up this measure and they refused. They refused because they knew it would pass. And that is why it is important for us to stand up and tell the American people what is at stake.

One of the most important things we can do is to face the reality that our immigration system is broken. And to fix this immigration system, we need to work together on a bipartisan basis. Let us not do it with a negative feeling toward these young people. Give the DREAMers a chance.

I will tell my colleagues this. If this bill comes over from the House of Representatives and this bill eliminates DACA, fate puts 1.6 million young DREAMers into the legal jeopardy of facing deportation, and then eliminates the rights of their parents who have children who are citizens or legal residents to stay in this country, then we are going to see a fight on the floor of the U.S. Senate. I think it is the responsible thing to do for us to stand up for these young people who had the courage to step out of the shadows, to register with their government, to submit themselves to a background check. The right and responsible thing to do is for us to stand behind them. There are so many amazing stories about these young people and to ignore them is to ignore America's legacy and roots.

We are a nation of immigrants. My mother was an immigrant to this country and I stand on the floor of the U.S. Senate honorably, I hope, representing the great State of Illinois, and really I hope a testament to what the sons of immigrants can do across America, and daughters as well. That is why this is an important issue for us to deal with and to do it forthrightly, and I urge my colleagues to resist this effort by the Republicans to deport 1.6 million eligible DREAMers and others who may stand the chance to make America a better and stronger nation.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

KEYSTONE XL PIPELINE ACT—MOTION TO PROCEED

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore.

Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 1, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 1, S. 1, a bill to approve the Keystone XL Pipeline.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the time until 12:30 p.m. will be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to an hour to discuss the Keystone XL Pipeline.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I wish to address my comments to the Keystone XL Pipeline approval bill—the legislation currently before the Senate—which is the motion to proceed to this legislation. The cloture on the motion to proceed to this legislation was passed 63 votes in favor to 32 votes against last night. I thank my colleagues for that tremendous bipartisan vote, and of course the good news is that the vote advances us to the bill. We have to have another vote now to actually move to the bill today, and we are working through an agreement to hold that vote. Then we will be on the bill and in a position where all Members of this body can offer amendments—Republicans and Democrats alike.

We will have an open amendment process. We will have regular order. We can have an energy debate. Members of this body are going to get to do what they haven't been able to do in some time, which is offer their amendments, bring forward their ideas, and let's have that energy discussion, let's have these amendments brought forward and debated, and if they can garner 60 votes, they will be passed and attached to the legislation. This is how the Senate is supposed to work and I encourage my colleagues to participate by offering their amendments to have the debate and do the work of this body—the important work for the people of this great Nation.

I would like to begin the discussion today in support of the Keystone XL Pipeline, the Keystone XL approval legislation, which is the bill we have in front of us, S. 1.

I note that my esteemed colleague, the senior Senator from Utah, is here. He is a Senator who leads us on a variety of issues and has for many years in our caucus, as the chairman of the Finance Committee. He certainly understands tax policy and fiscal policy for this country.

This legislation we are considering is a jobs bill. It is about energy. It is about jobs. It is about economic growth. It is about national security.

The Senator from Utah is working on reforming our Tax Code and how we can stimulate economic growth in this country. So I wish to turn to him right at the outset and ask—as someone who truly understands how our economy works and how we have to build a good business climate in this country and how we have to empower the development of infrastructure, roads, and rails, pipelines and transmission lines as part of building an energy policy that will truly make this Nation energy secure—if he would take a few minutes and address not only this project on the broad basis of its merits, but particularly some of the economic aspects that are so important when we are talking about growing our economy and putting our people in this country to work in good jobs.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Utah.

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I wish to thank my distinguished colleague for leading this fight. He has been leading it for years now. It is such a no-brainer. It is amazing to me that we have to go through this again. I thank him for yielding to me, and I would like to associate myself with the many persuasive arguments that have been made here by my colleagues—both Democratic and Republican—urging the speedy passage of this legislation.

To me, the decision to approve this pipeline is an obvious one for a host of reasons:

It will support more than 42,000 good-paying jobs. I didn't quite get what the assistant minority leader was saying today on how few jobs it will create. It actually will support more than 42,000 good-paying jobs during its construction phase.

It will contribute more than $3.4 billion to our gross domestic product.

It will aid in the goal of North American energy independence.

As the State Department's environmental impact statement found, building the Keystone XL Pipeline will actually be better for the environment than not building it. The energy resources the Canadians produce will reach the market regardless of whether this pipeline is built, and Keystone XL is by far the safest, cleanest, and most efficient means of doing so. What are the arguments against it other than phony environmental arguments? That was the State Department, controlled by them.

As a commonsense, bipartisan jobs and infrastructure measure, this bill is exactly the sort of legislation the Senate should be considering as its first order of business in this new Congress, but it should not have to be. The story here is about more than a single pipeline, no matter how many jobs its construction will create, no matter how important it is for our energy independence, and no matter how environmentally sound it is. This is a story about a regulatory process that is clearly broken. This is a story about special interests manipulating the bureaucracy to muck up a process that should be very simple and uncontroversial. This is a story about just one of many examples of tragically missed opportunities to create good-paying jobs and provide relief for household budgets across the country.

The application for approval of the Keystone XL Pipeline was first filed in September of 2008—more than 6 years ago. U.S. Senators have served more than a full term during that time. Children born after the application was filed are now in first grade.

The notion that any infrastructure project should be held up for such a long period is disturbing not just to me but I think to anybody who carefully

looks at this, but the delay of Keystone XL is even worse. Given the strong and well-documented economic and environmental case for the pipeline, Keystone is the sort of project that should have been quickly and easily approved for construction. But for some committed environmentalists inside and outside the Obama administration, common sense and balanced consideration of the facts no longer matter. Instead, to them, this simple pipeline has become a political symbol, regardless of what the science tells us. They have directed their ample energies at throwing up every procedural roadblock imaginable to the approval of the pipeline. As a result, this project has endured delay after delay.

Over the past few years, the American people have rightly developed the impression that Washington is broken. There can be no better example of the consequence of this dysfunction than the Keystone XL Pipeline sitting in bureaucratic purgatory.

When a project such as this—which is good for jobs, good for families, and good for families' budgets—gets bogged down in the Obama administration's redtape, it is absolutely the responsibility of Congress to act. Unfortunately, for years the Senate became a place where good ideas such as approving Keystone XL came to die, where control of the calendar and the amendment process prevented the consideration of so many good, bipartisan issues and ideas. Not only was the administrative process broken, but the Senate was also paralyzed and unable to step in and fix it.

By taking up this important bill as our first matter of consideration in the new Congress, we are taking steps to restore the Senate to the great legislative body it is meant to be, the place where Senators work across the aisle to meet the needs of the American people.

By coming together to propose a commonsense solution to get back on track this project which has become such a symbol of what is wrong with Washington, my friends from North Dakota and West Virginia are demonstrating exactly the sort of thoughtful, inclusive, and bipartisan leadership the American people have been demanding as they watched this greatest deliberative body in the world become the laughingstock of the world because we haven't gotten very much done. We haven't gotten very much done because of the way it has been run over the last number of years.

It is my sincere hope that we move quickly and desperately and deliberately to approve this measure and that we soon begin considering serious regulatory reform to prevent the sorts of abuses we have seen bedevil the Keystone XL project. The American people deserve an efficient and effective regulatory process that works for them. It is time for the Senate to deliver.

Having said these few words, I wish to personally thank my distinguished colleagues from North Dakota and my colleagues from West Virginia for the leadership they have provided on this issue.

Senator HOEVEN is a former Governor. He knows what he is talking about. He is one of the most reasonable, decent, and honorable people in this body. He has shown a great willingness to work with both sides. He has continued to fight for this even though it has been uphill for more than 6 years. He has continued to fight for it because it is right. It is the right thing to do, and it is in our best interest to do it and to do it now.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I wish to thank the distinguished Senator from Utah for his leadership both today and over the past many years on this floor. I would like to pick up on a point he emphasized and did so very eloquently. He is in a unique position to comment on it, and that is the importance of having this open amendment process; having regular order on the Senate floor; allowing Senators, Republican and Democratic alike, to come forward and bring their ideas forward, bring their amendments forward, have this discussion, and do it in an open way.

The whole effort here is to produce good energy legislation that will help this country move forward but also to foster bipartisanship—to foster bipartisanship on this bill and other legislation so that we can get the work done that this body needs to get done on behalf of the American people. That is what this is all about. This is about getting the work done for the American people on the important issues our country faces.

That is why this bill is S. 1—not just because it is important energy infrastructure legislation, not just because we need to have this debate on energy, not just because we need to advance legislation to help build our energy future, but because it is truly an effort to get this body working in a bipartisan way on this and other important issues for the American people. That is what the American people want. They want us to get the job done.

Again, I thank the Senator from Utah for bringing out the important fact and discussing why it is so important that we approach legislation in that way.

I would like to turn to my good friend, the senior Senator from the great State of Arkansas, somebody who I think really has a good understanding of how our economy works and what needs to be done, somebody who has good relationships on both sides of the aisle, which is so important as we try to build support for this and other legislation, and somebody whose State is directly affected by this project. I know he will agree with me that it is very important on behalf of the State of Arkansas that we move forward with the Keystone XL Pipeline project. I think a very high percentage of the pipe that goes into this project—about a 1,200-mile-long project—is actually manufactured and made in Arkansas. So that is a clear benefit for the manufacturing industry and workers in the State of Arkansas that correlates directly to this project and to this legislation.

So I would like to turn to the senior Senator from Arkansas and ask him about that and ask him to tell us about the importance of this project in terms of what it means to the great State of Arkansas.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. BOOZMAN. It is a pleasure to have the opportunity to talk about the Keystone Pipeline. I also wish to thank the Senator from North Dakota for his tireless efforts and his leadership on behalf of getting the Keystone Pipeline project moving.

For the past 6 years I have urged the administration to approve the project. I voted for legislation to speed up the pipeline construction. This pipeline makes sense for job creation and the future of our Nation's energy supply.

In a recent email survey sent to more than 30,000 Arkansans, I asked what issues the new majority in the Senate should focus on in the 114th Congress. Participants told me that one of their top priorities is an ''all of the above'' energy policy that addresses current and future energy needs.

The Senate has an opportunity to pass legislation that is a commonsense plan to improve our Nation's energy supply by approving the Keystone XL Pipeline. Tapping into these Canadian oil sands will offer us a reliable source of energy from one of our strongest allies and trading partners. This is good news as we work to reduce our dependence on oil from regions of the world that are hostile toward our country, and it is good news for Arkansas. Here is why.

Approval of this infrastructure project will mean jobs. This is one reason it has the support of both parties. Organized labor has been very vocal in support of the pipeline. Unions understand that this infrastructure project will create well-paying jobs for skilled laborers, and it will do so at no expense to the taxpayers. And it is not just unions; certainly businesses are supportive of the pipeline too, as well as an overwhelming majority of Americans.

Last month, as the Senator from North Dakota alluded to, I toured the Welspun Tubular Company, the Little Rock-based company hired to produce hundreds of miles of pipeline for the project. Company officers estimate that 150 jobs will be created just to load the pipe onto the railcars for shipment when the project finally gets the green light.

The economic impact has wide reach to Arkansans. Blytheville's Nucor Corporation was slated to make some of

the steel for the pipeline, and there is a trickle-down impact throughout the State.

A central Arkansas Caterpillar employee wrote to me about the importance of this project to his job because of its impact on his livelihood. ''The Keystone pipeline project would be a huge boost to us,'' he wrote.

Once built, the infrastructure will provide a safe and reliable supply of energy. Currently, this oil is transported from Canada to refiners by rail and truck. A new, modern pipeline poses less risk to the environment than these current modes of transportation. The project will help maintain lower fuel prices, which is good for all Americans.

At every hurdle, using science and common sense, this project gets the green light. Last week Nebraska's Supreme Court upheld the State's law approving a route for the pipeline through the State.

Time and again this project passes the test, but the President has threatened to veto the bill. This isn't surprising considering the administration spent more than 6 years analyzing this and punting a decision down the road until further studies have been conducted. The pipeline is being studied literally to death. It is ready to go. Yet the President is still looking for ways to stop it.

The American people deserve this affordable energy. They deserve well-paying jobs. Both can be accomplished by building the Keystone Pipeline.

Again, I thank the Senator from North Dakota for his tireless efforts in the past 6 years trying to get this project off the ground. The good news is I think we have made real progress.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I would like to thank the Senator from Arkansas and once again point out this is another State that will benefit from this project. This is a State far removed from the route of the project. As I pointed out in earlier debate on this floor, all of the States on the route, from Montana to Texas, have approved the project—all of them. They have all approved it. The only entity still holding up the approval of the Keystone XL Pipeline is the Federal Government, the Obama administration.

All of the States have approved it. Those States on the route will realize tremendous benefits from the construction—from the construction jobs, from the hundreds of millions of dollars they will receive in tax revenues, payment in lieu of taxes at the State and local level. They will receive tremendous benefit from this project, not to mention of course the benefit the whole country receives as we become more energy independent by working with Canada to truly achieve North American energy security.

But here is a State, Arkansas, far removed from the route of the pipeline. I do not think the oil will—I do not know about refineries in Arkansas. I do not think there are refineries there that it will go to. It will go to refineries in States such as Louisiana and Texas and so forth.

But even still, Arkansas will benefit directly from this project because they manufacture much of the pipe that goes into the project. Those are good manufacturing jobs that not only benefit those workers, but then you have the secondary impacts. Once again I thank the Senator from Arkansas for coming down to the floor and taking a few minutes to point that out.

We will continue over the next several weeks to talk about the benefits in other States as well. I thank the good Senator from Arkansas at this time. Even though I have floor time reserved until about 11:15 or a little more, I would like to actually stop and allow the Senator from Washington to talk about her views on it. I know she is not—of course, I work with her on the energy committee. She is our ranking member. I enjoy and appreciate working with her, but I understand she shares different views in this case.

I ask unanimous consent that her time for the next 10 to 15 minutes, as she needs, not be counted against my time. I would be willing to defer so she can speak at this time.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. CANTWELL. I thank the Senator from North Dakota. I know we are going to be going back and forth on this issue and that we have other people coming. Later this morning we are going to have time divided. But I appreciate the Senator from North Dakota allowing us to join in the debate this morning and make a few points.

I do want to say I appreciate the hard work of the Senator from North Dakota on the energy committee in general. I look forward to working with him on many energy policies. He and I have worked together on a couple of different agricultural issues. I certainly appreciate his due diligence, but needless to say I do not agree with the process of moving forward with this motion to proceed to the Keystone XL Pipeline bill.

Many of my colleagues are going to be coming down and talking about the issues. Two of my colleagues, including the Senators from Utah and Arkansas, along with the Senator from North Dakota, brought up a couple of different points. But in my mind, they are talking about a 19th century energy policy and fossil fuel instead of us focusing on what should be a 21st century energy policy for our country.

It is unfortunate that S. 1 is a very narrow, specific, special interest measure for a pipeline that did not go through the proper channels of a permitting process and because of that is flawed. As people are heralding it as the new Congress.

This process continues today with people saying: Let's just give it more special interest attention and approve it. I believe America should be a leader in energy policy and that our job creation is dependent upon that energy policy for the future. We want to see America be a leader in this. I applaud the fact that the President reached a climate and clean energy agreement with China.

We are over 60 percent of the world's energy consumption. If the two countries can work together on a clean energy strategy, I guarantee that will be good business for the U.S. economy. In fact, I read a statistic that something like 50 percent of all energy is going to be consumed by the buildings in China—there is huge growth in building development, but they do not have good building standards so those buildings consume too much energy. So there is a lot to do on energy efficiency that will grow U.S. jobs and help us. That is why we would rather see us focusing on some of the energy policies that we did in 2005 and 2007. Those things unleash huge opportunities for American jobs and huge opportunities for American consumers to get a better deal and not be subject to price spikes.

The 2007 bill had fuel efficiency standards in it and laid the foundation for the growth of the hybrid electric car industry and has added over 263,000 jobs in the last 5 years. That is the kind of smart policy we should be pursuing. We also have had energy bills that made investments in clean energy tax credits, something I was just talking about with my colleague from Utah, saying we needed to move forward on energy tax credits. If there is nothing else that we should be doing, we should be doing that as S. 1, because the predictability and certainty we would be giving to that industry would certainly unleash many jobs.

So the 2005 and 2007 energy bills that we did in a bipartisan fashion helped foster an energy-efficient economy and helped support 450,000 jobs according to a 2011 Brookings Institution report.

These are examples of the types of things we have done in the past that have unleashed investment, and have grown jobs in the United States of America. They are important milestones in the type of clarity Congress can give to the private sector to spur growth and development. I can guarantee this is the opposite of that. This is about a special interest deal and overriding a process, including the White House process and local government process, that is so essential.

Two examples of what we should be doing instead: As I said, the energy tax credits which have been delayed. As my colleagues from Oregon pointed out at the end of last year, we basically authorized them for about 2 more weeks in December. That was about all the certainty we gave the industry. A McKinsey report has estimated that providing the right incentives for retrofitting buildings and energy efficiency would help employ 900,000 people over the next decade; that the wind energy tax credit would employ 54,000

people, and there are other issues about modernizing our grid and new technology storage.

There is also very important work to be done in the manufacturing sector; that is, to help unleash innovation by making sure we set standards on improving efficiency and focusing on lightweight materials for both automobiles and aviation. We have seen huge job growth in the Pacific Northwest because we were able to transform aerospace into lighter weight materials. We are also working on a biojet fuel.

So all of these things mean we have to get the R&D right, we have to get the tax credits right, and we need to help protect consumers from spiking energy prices. This is the evolution. I do not think anybody in America thinks we are going to hold on to a 19th century fossil fuel economy forever. The question is, Whether Congress is going to spend its time moving forward on a 21st century plan that gives the predictability and certainty to unleash that leadership and capture the opportunities in developing markets around the globe or whether we are going to hold on to the last elements of fossil fuel forever and leave our constituents more at risk.

But I would like to take a few minutes and talk about this process my colleagues are trying to describe as to why we need to hurry. Because I can guarantee that is what people have been trying to do all along, hurry this along for a special interest. I do not believe that is good for the American people. I do not think it is good for this process.

If we think about where we have been, this process is about people who are trying to push a route through no matter what the circumstances. Every State, people are saying, has approved this process. I can guarantee there are a lot of people in Nebraska and a lot of people in South Dakota who do not agree with that. They are very concerned about the public interest.

Unfortunately, in the case of the Keystone XL project, landowners and ranchers in Nebraska affected by the pipeline did not feel they were afforded equal opportunity before the law. In their view the process was set up to benefit a special interest, the TransCanada Corporation. On three separate occasions, beginning in 2011, the Nebraska Legislature passed carve-outs to circumvent the role of the public service commission to approve the Keystone Pipeline.

If this was such a great deal, why can't it go through the normal process, as in every other State, with a transportation and utilities commission ruling on siting? Why do we have to take the public interest out of it? The first carve-out included the Major Oil Pipeline Siting Act of 2011. So this bill laid out the rule that the public service commission determined whether a new pipeline project was in the public interest. In making this decision, the legislature required that the commission consider eight criteria.

Among them: the environmental impact of water and wildlife and vegetation, the economic and social impact, the alternative route, the impact to future development in the pipeline's proposal, and the views of counties and cities. OK. That all sounds great, right? That is what the legislature says they should be considering. But the legislature also required the commission to hold public hearings and have public comment—OK, we are still on the right track—and importantly required the commission to establish a process for appealing the decision, so that any aggrieved party could have due process rights under the Administrative Procedures Act.

Here is the punch line. Tucked away in that Nebraska legislation was a special interest carve-out that exempted TransCanada—Keystone XL—from having to comply with the public service commission process. Specifically, the legislation stated, ''. . . shall not apply to any major oil pipeline that has submitted an application to the US Department of State pursuant to Executive Order 13337 prior to the effective date of this act.''

There was only one company that qualified for this special interest exemption at the time of that legislation; that was TransCanada. So you got it. The legislature basically exempted them from that process, even though they were stating that these are the processes that you should go through. So at the very time the legislature created new rules for due process on the pipeline, it exempted them from those rules. I do not understand why TransCanada cannot play by the rules, but I guarantee you Congress does not have to join in and make S. 1 a special interest bill. They should make sure everyone plays by the rules.

In this same legislative session, the Nebraska legislature also passed the Oil Pipeline Route Certification Act. This bill provided Keystone XL with an expedited review process by the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality and gave the sole authority to approve the project to the Governor. Unfortunately, for the legislature and for TransCanada, these carve-outs quickly became irrelevant because President Obama denied the application in 2012. That is in part due to the fact that Congress had decided to try to intervene in the matter. That is when Congress said this is important and we should go ahead and do this.

I am going to get into more detail on that in a second. This is important to understand because the initial Nebraska legislation was so narrowly tailored, it was designed to benefit the TransCanada pipeline and its pending date of enactment. What happened next? The legislature went back to the drawing board and created a third new special carve-out for the Keystone XL Pipeline.

The day following the President's denial of TransCanada's application, a new bill was introduced in the Nebraska Legislature. This bill was yet another path around the existing due process afforded to citizens in that State. The legislation allowed the company to choose whether to go through a formal process with the public service commission or seek expedited review with the Governor. I am sure a lot of U.S. companies would love to have that opportunity.

These are U.S. companies that have to pay lawyers, go through environmental processes, make sure all of the issues are addressed. I am sure American companies would love to know any day of the week they can just go past a utility commission and get the Governor to stamp ''approved'' on their project. Under this expedited approach, the legislature authorized the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality to independently conduct an environmental impact report. However, unlike due process required by the public service commission, this process required only token outreach to the public.

There was just one public hearing in 2012. This special process provided no recourse for aggrieved parties. There was no formal appeals process. Other than the courts, there was no administrative process with the ability for stakeholders to challenge the facts as a matter of record to base their formal appeal on. These are fundamental differences between an expedited consideration within the Governor's office and a process requiring a public interest determination by relevant decision-makers at a commission.

I know my colleagues here would like to argue that somehow this has been a long, drawn-out process. This has really been a process by one company constantly circumventing the rules on the books and trying to get a special deal for approval. We have to ask ourselves why. Why do they want to proceed this way?

I know my colleagues always like to talk about their neighbors. My neighbors in British Columbia are not so thrilled about tar sands pipeline activity. They are not interested in it. So maybe that is why TransCanada wants to hurry and get this process through in the United States.

I ask my colleagues, do you have confidence the public interest was really taken into consideration—that you run over the interests of private property owners on these issues? Was the department of environmental quality evaluation comprehensive?

I can say one Nebraska landowner described the report as ''an incomplete evaluation of a natural resource with the magnitude of the Ogallala Aquifer, and now it is left in the hands of TransCanada to do their own policing.''

Another family, who has been ranching for more than five generations in Nebraska, said the process left landowners with nowhere to turn with their concerns of erosion, water contamination or eminent domain.

Another landowner had this to say about circumventing the process in Nebraska:

> I feel it is not in the best interest of Nebraska, nor the citizens of Nebraska, to have our legislators crafting special legislation to meet the specific demands of an individual corporation.

I couldn't agree with them more. That is exactly what we are trying to do today.

The same stakeholders in Nebraska have also questioned the appearance of conflict of interest associated with the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality report since it was prepared by a contractor who also worked for TransCanada and Exxon on different joint pipeline projects.

Meanwhile, a majority of the State Supreme Court, 4 out of 7 justices, just last week ruled that the legislature and the Governor's actions were unconstitutional.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FLAKE). The Senator has consumed 15 minutes.

Ms. CANTWELL. I ask unanimous consent that I be given an additional 2 minutes to wrap up.

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

Ms. CANTWELL. My colleague has already given me some time this morning—and I can certainly come back and add more to the debate—but what I am outlining is exactly how this process has circumvented the laws of this land. One more action by this body is exactly what this special interest company is seeking.

If Congress had succeeded in pushing the President of the United States into agreeing to the original route through Nebraska in 2011, the route would have been right through the Ogallala Aquifer. Even TransCanada had already agreed that it needed to change the route. I don't know why we are being asked to push something through when we really should allow the State Department to do its job.

I will have much more to say on this process of the circumventing of public interest; about the devastating spill in the Kalamazoo River, and the fact that we don't know all we need to know about tar sands cleanup in water; and the fact that Midwest gasoline prices could be affected if this pipeline is approved.

There are many issues. So I will gladly debate this with my colleagues throughout the rest of this week.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. I wish to resume my time for the colloquy.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota is recognized.

Mr. HOEVEN. I will take a couple of minutes to respond to the points that my colleague on the energy committee just brought up with regard to both the process and also in regard to the timeline for approval of this project. Then I will turn to my cosponsor, the Senator from West Virginia, and get some of his input on the project.

Now we are starting to get into the kind of debate that we have wanted from day one. I had the good fortune to serve as Governor of my great State of North Dakota, and the good Senator on the floor with me from West Virginia was Governor at the same time of his State of West Virginia. We worked together many times on issues. I am a Republican, and he is a Democrat. We found common ground as Governors, and we found common ground in the Senate.

This is what this is all about. This is what we want to have happen among our colleagues so we can get this and other important legislation addressed, passed, and help our country.

But before I turn to my colleague from West Virginia, I wish to touch briefly on a couple of points that the ranking member of our energy committee brought up a moment ago. As she said, she opposes the project. I understand and respect her views, but she talked about the length of time the approval process takes.

What I have to point out is that we have been in this approval process now for more than 6 years. So when she talks about needing more time to get the project approved, it is hard to understand how we are going to have a working, functioning economy, how we are going to get the private sector to invest the billions of dollars it takes. This project alone is the largest shovel-ready project that is ready to go—just under $8 billion, $7.9 billion—and it has been held up for more than 6 years.

America got into World War II and won the war in less than 6 years. Building the Hoover Dam, I believe, took less than 6 years. If we are going to create the kind of environment where we stimulate investment by the private sector, get our economy growing and growing and get people back to work, we can't hold private investment up.

Remember, not one penny of Federal spending—almost $8 billion, almost all private investment that will help create jobs, help grow our economy, create hundreds of millions in tax revenue, help us to build our energy future, help us with national security by being energy secure—all those things—and the Federal Government has held them up for more than 6 years.

How can we argue that there is any process there that works in any kind of a realistic or commonsense way when it has been up for more than 6 years.

Specifically—as regards the State of Nebraska—in 2012 I put forward legislation which we passed in this body attached to the payroll tax holiday that required the President to make a decision.

We didn't tell them what decision to make. We just said: Hey, you have to make a decision. At that point the project had been under review for 4 years—long enough, Mr. President, to make a national interest determination. That is what the legislation said that we attached to the payroll tax holiday. It passed with 73 votes.

The President at that time said: No, I am not going to make a decision on the project now because of what he perceived to be the problem with the route in Nebraska.

Remember, this project goes through States from Montana to Texas. Here it is. Remember, it is not carrying only Canadian crude. It carries crude from my State of North Dakota and the State of Montana. Light, sweet Bakken crude goes into this pipeline as well.

Everyone talks about the Canadian crude, but they forget that this moves domestic crude as well. My State alone produces 1.2 million barrels of oil a day, and we are moving 700,000 of barrels a day on trains because we can't get enough pipelines. Here we want to put 100,000 barrels a day into this pipeline, and we have been waiting for 6 years putting more and more oil on rail cars, congestion on the rails. We can't move our agriculture products, and we have been held up for 6 years. But in 2012 we passed that bill.

This body passed it, then the House, and it went to the President. Then he turned it down because he said the routing wasn't right in Nebraska. There is an objection here. Here we see the pipeline goes through Nebraska.

He said: No, I am not going to approve it at this point because they have to square it away in Nebraska.

In Nebraska, the State legislature, the elected body of the people, went to work with Governor Dave Heineman, a good friend of mine, and the Senator from West Virginia as well. We served with Governor Dave Heineman.

The elected body of the people, the legislature, went to work with the Governor. They went through a long process. They rerouted the pipeline to address any concerns regarding the Ogallala Aquifer and any other concerns that had been brought—a long laborious process—and approved it.

Every State on the route has approved the project. They have all approved it. They have had 6 years to do it. So it wasn't like they had to hurry, but they all approved it. Yet the Federal Government continues to hold it up and say: Oh, well, we have concerns.

Now, my esteemed colleague from Washington, who opposes the project, said that she was concerned about the supreme court decision.

Well, remember, the supreme court decision came up because after the State of Nebraska approved the project, then opponents challenged it, forced it into court, and it went to the Nebraska Supreme Court. The Nebraska Supreme Court found in favor of the Governor and the legislature for the State of Nebraska. They found in favor of the route, and the State of Nebraska said that is as it should be—OK.

So that is all that was covered at great length by the elected representatives of the State of Nebraska and the Nebraska Supreme Court. I mean, how much more does this take? Furthermore, there is the point that my colleague was making: Well, if we had

rushed, somehow this would have been a problem.

We put it in the legislation in section 2, under the private property savings clause, to make sure that if there is any issue such as that it is addressed in this legislation. So the very concern that she has raised is in the legislation.

The reason it is in there is because the good Senator from Montana—which is also on the route—Mr. TESTER, wanted this provision in the bill. He is also a Democrat. In showing the bipartisanship of the bill, he said: Well, let's make sure we take care of that. So we put language in the bill to make sure that the language we just addressed on the floor is addressed. It is very short, and I will read it—section 2, subsection (e):

PRIVATE PROPERTY SAVINGS CLAUSE.—Nothing in this Act alters any Federal, State, or local process or condition in effect on the date of enactment of this Act that is necessary to secure access from an owner of private property to construct the pipeline and cross-border facilities described in section (a).

So we tried to make sure—and furthermore—let me also read judicial review. That section is long, and I won't read it. But we also provided for judicial review so that if any of those issues are a concern—in addition to the language we put in to protect States rights—you also have judicial review. I don't know how much more we can do to make sure any and all concerns she just raised in regard to the process of the individual States is protected.

Again, I make the case today that we have all gone through great lengths to approve the project. The only entity blocking it now after more than 6 years is the Federal Government.

There is one other point I would make briefly before turning to the Senator from West Virginia. The good Senator from Washington talked about alternative energy sources, renewable energy sources, other energy resources, and how we need to develop them. They create jobs, and that is great.

This is a note on which I will turn to my cosponsor, the distinguished Senator from West Virginia. We are for ''all of the above'' energy approach, but we have to get over the idea that somehow they are mutually exclusive. We go forward and build important infrastructure so that we can make sure that we don't have to import oil from OPEC or from countries such as Venezuela or from other parts of the world, to ensure that we can be secure in energy and that we can produce as much or more oil than we consume—both domestic oil production and in Canada. We need the infrastructure.

But that in no way precludes the development of any other sources of energy. They are not mutually exclusive. So to say that we should be doing one and not the other—how does that make sense? Let's do them both.

On that note, I turn to my colleague. Ask anybody in this body, particularly those coming to the Senate as a former Governor. He is somebody who not only is very bipartisan in his approach to all of these issues, somebody who has not only advocated for producing all of the above in terms of energy, but somebody who has done it in his time as Governor.

So I turn to my colleague and say: Can't we do both? Isn't approving this part of doing it all?

Mr. MANCHIN. First, I thank the Senator from North Dakota, my friend, for taking the lead and working with me so closely. I am very excited about the process, the open amendment process.

We are learning a lot in debates, a lot of good ideas are coming out of this. When all is said and done, we will have a better piece of legislation. That is what this is all about.

Let me make sure everyone understands this is not all about pipelines. If this is about an XL pipeline or any other pipeline, we wouldn't have a hundred thousand miles of pipeline in America already. Since the Industrial Revolution we would not have built all the pipelines needed to carry the energy that we need to run this country. This is not about pipeline.

This is about the concerns we all have with greenhouse gas emissions and the development of the oil sands in Canada—nothing to do with the pipeline.

With that being said. We have to be very clear that Canada is going to develop the oil sands whether or not the Keystone pipeline is built. That is a fact, and we have talked about this.

The State Department—our own State Department in this great country of ours, the United States of America—has conducted five environmental assessments of the Keystone Pipeline and have found in all of them that the project will not have a significant impact on the environment. Now these are the things we have to be cognizant of.

The State Department also found the pipeline is unlikely to significantly affect the rate of extraction in Canadian oil development. That means whatever we do here is not going to change the rate of development in the oil sands.

The State Department also examined alternatives to the proposed XL Pipeline. These alternatives included what would happen if no action were taken at all. Let's say we do nothing here; that nothing comes about with this pipeline. Likely, the crude would be shipped westward by rail or by tanker. That is happening today. So they are going to ship it anyway. And if that continued, it would be considered no action. If we take no action here and don't build this pipeline for whatever reason, the greenhouse gas emissions—which we are all concerned about, and our debates are about that, really—will be between 28 to 42 percent higher if we do nothing.

So those people who are concerned about greenhouse gas emissions should say: Well, OK, why do we want to contribute to more? The pipeline decreases that. If we don't do it, we have 28 to 42 percent more emissions by how we will move this oil. So the pipeline addresses our energy security limits, and I have talked about that before, and our dependence on foreign oil.

I have said this many times. We all are entitled to our opinions, and I think we are all going to hear all those opinions in the next couple of weeks. But what we are not entitled to is our own set of facts, because the facts are what they are. I have said this before, and I will repeat it again, and I will continue to repeat: We buy, as of the 2013 figures from the Department of Energy's EIA, we—the United States of America—buy 7 million barrels of crude oil a day. Whether we like it or not, we are buying it. Now, I am sure people say: I wish we didn't. Well, that is what it takes for our economy to run. We are buying that oil—7 million barrels a day.

Then we need to look at where the oil is coming from. If you are upset with Canada producing oil, we already buy 2½ million a day from Canada right now. We are already dependent upon Canada for 2½ million barrels a day.

We also buy oil from other countries, and I think we should all question why we are buying oil from these other countries, especially when we look at Venezuela. We buy 755,000 barrels a day from Venezuela. They are an authoritarian regime that impoverishes their citizens. We know that. They violate their human rights and have shown their willingness to put down political protest with horrific violence. Yet we are supporting that by purchasing a product from them which they then use the resources from to continue this type of regime.

The same here: In 2013, we bought 1.3 million barrels from Saudi Arabia. Now I don't know about my colleagues, but I question whether the resources from that or the proceeds from that oil that we paid Saudi Arabia for were used for the betterment of the United States of America, for our best interests. I have my doubts about that.

We also buy over 40,000 barrels a day from Russia. I don't need to say anything about what is going on there. I think we all know that.

The Keystone Pipeline would allow us to safely import more oil from a stable ally and one of our best trading partners. In fact, it is the No. 1 trading partner of 35 of our 50 States in the United States of America. Our No. 1 trading partner is Canada. It is also the most stable regime we have, the best ally we have ever had.

The pipeline will have a final capacity of a little more than 800,000 barrels a day. So right there we could stop buying any oil from Venezuela or cut down dramatically the amount of oil we buy from Saudi Arabia and become less dependent. We can continue to produce energy in North America while stabilizing global supply as well as benefiting Americans and our allies.

In fact, last year, one of President Obama's former national security advisors—one of President's former national security advisors, Retired Marine Gen. James Jones—told the Foreign Relations Committee:

The international bullies who wish to use energy scarcity as a weapon against us all are watching intently. If we want to make Mr. Putin's day and strengthen his hand, we should reject the Keystone.

Let me repeat that:

If we want to make Mr. Putin's day and strengthen his hand, we should reject the Keystone. If we want to gain an important measure of national energy security, jobs, tax revenue and prosperity to advance our work on the spectrum of energy solutions that don't rely on carbon, it should be approved.

So you have to decide which side you are on. Do you want to make Mr. Putin's day or do you want to find alternatives and use all of the above and be less dependent on foreign oil?

In addition to our national security interests and energy independence, this bill will also create thousands of jobs. I think we have talked about that. I hear the argument: Well, yes, but they are not going to be permanent. You know, we have built a lot of bridges in America, a lot of infrastructure, and a lot of roads. I don't know of any permanent jobs we have after we build a bridge, but we have a lot of good construction jobs when we are building the bridge. I don't know of any permanent jobs after we build a road, but we have a lot of good construction and high-paying jobs. And when you start looking at that, the building and construction trades, the teamsters, the AFL–CIO, all of our friends of working Americans, the middle class—the hard-working Americans—support this piece of legislation. They want these jobs.

Our own State Department says it will create about 42,000 jobs to construct the pipeline and thousands of other related jobs. So why don't we seize the opportunity?

We talk about amendments. This is an open amendment process. A lot of my colleagues, a lot of my Democratic colleagues on my side of the aisle, have some great ideas and I am going to work with them. I agree with my Democratic friends that companies shipping oil through this pipeline should pay the excise tax to the oilspill trust fund. There is no reason they should be exempted from these payments. I am going to work with them to put that amendment in. It is a good amendment and it will strengthen the bill. That is what the amendment process is about.

I agree also with my colleagues on the Democratic side that any steel needed in the future on this product should be bought from American steel companies. That is great. That is promoting more jobs in America: Buy American steel. Don't let them dump on us. We should be supporting American jobs.

I also agree with our friends we shouldn't export any of our oil abroad. If that oil comes to America, it should be subjected to the same laws as all the oil that is extracted in America. So if we extract in the Balkans, if we extract in Texas, we treat them all the same. Those are all good amendments.

I would like to think this process will strengthen a piece of legislation and hopefully give us 68, 70 votes. That would really give us a good piece of legislation for the American people.

We have been promised an open amendment process, and I am so thankful for that. This presents an incredibly valuable opportunity to accomplish some of our Democratic priorities—some of our Democratic priorities that we talk about all the time on my side of the aisle. I believe the process will improve the bill, and I hope to convince my colleagues to support this important piece of legislation.

Let us get the needed votes we need to make sure we move our country forward, become less dependent on foreign oil and more self-sufficient and more secure as a nation.

I thank the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Ms. CANTWELL. I know we have several colleagues who want to come and speak on other issues this morning, and then we have some Members who want to join back in on this debate, but I want to make a few points and finish up my remarks from earlier and then yield to our other colleagues.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. I ask the Senator to yield for the purpose of a question. I want to understand the time. I need about 3, 4 minutes to wrap up. I did relinquish 15 minutes for the other side, so I would request 3 to 4 minutes to wrap up and then I would certainly yield the floor to her.

Ms. CANTWELL. Go right ahead.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota is recognized.

Mr. HOEVEN. I just want to wrap up.

I want to thank the Senator from West Virginia. I am glad we are engaged in this debate. I think we should debate all aspects of it, as we are, and I look forward to that continuing effort.

I do, though, want to wrap up on a point as to the environmental impact. We have talked about a number of different aspects of this pipeline project. We are talking about taking great care in the approval process to address all the issues at the State level. We have talked about making sure we put provisions in the bill to respect that State process. That has been going on for more than 6 years and, obviously, it is now well past time for the Federal Government to move forward and make its decision.

But again, back to that process. If the President continues to oppose this legislation—and he has indicated he will veto it because he has a process and he hasn't finished the process—then he needs to demonstrate and finish the process. He indicated he was holding out for the decision in Nebraska. Well, the decision in Nebraska has been completed. So if there is a process, if there is a real process, then he needs to make a decision and he needs to tell us when he is going to make that decision. And if the President follows his process, he needs to make a decision in favor of the project. Because as I am pretty sure we are going to hear from some of the opponents of the project, they will say: Oh, well, based on environmental issues, that is why he should turn it down.

I understand and respect their views on some of the climate change issues, and they are certainly entitled to those opinions, but based on five studies—three draft environmental impact statements and two final environmental impact statements done on this project—the Obama administration's State Department in those environmental impact statements found this will result: As a result of this project, ''no significant environmental impact.''

I understand they are going to spend a lot of time talking about their views on climate change, and that is fine. I understand that. But there is a difference between opinion and that general discussion and the science of this project. That is the finding by the Obama administration.

We will have more discussion on this issue, in addition to the fact that Canada is working to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions from oil production in their country and in the oil sands. Since 1990, on a per-barrel basis, they have reduced greenhouse gas emissions by about 28 percent, and they are continuing to do more. So they are addressing the environmental issue by doing what? Investing in technology that not only produces more energy but does it with better environmental stewardship.

So instead of empowering that investment, here we want to block it? That is not the way to address better environmental stewardship. The way to do it is by encouraging the investment that not only produces more energy but does it with better environmental stewardship.

Again, I want to thank my colleague and fellow member of the energy committee for deferring so I could wrap up, and I look forward to continuing this debate and discussion on this important issue.

With that, I yield the floor.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, as I said, I know we have other colleagues here, so I will wrap up my opening remarks on the debate, then turn it over to other colleagues who are wanting to speak on this subject and other matters this morning.

I want to respond to a couple of things, because I know our colleagues keep thinking this is something we have to do and we have to expedite. But the reason why this project hasn't been approved to date is because we

haven't followed the process, and people keep bringing up objections to that process.

Along those lines, I want to turn back to congressional involvement in this matter during the back-and-forth with Nebraska on the pipeline route change in the Sandhills region.

During the time from 2008 until 2012, the U.S. State Department was reviewing TransCanada's initial pipeline application. This process requires a national interest determination by the President. It is worth reminding my colleagues this was a process laid out by President Bush. But in the review of that process, in their initial application, the State Department, in 2011, announced that an alternative route through Nebraska needed to be found to avoid the uniquely sensitive terrain of the Sandhills area.

The President and the State Department said we need to go a different route. So what happens next? One would think that most people would stop and listen and say: Oh, my gosh, there is a concern about this aquifer. But that is not what happened. That is not what happened. People came to Congress and said: We should get the old route approved in the aquifer that provides 30 percent of the groundwater for irrigation through the United States—where a spill would have been disastrous.

At the same time the State Department was telling the company, we have real concerns; you need to re-route the pipeline. The company was coming here to Congress trying to push the old route through at the same time the State Department was negotiating. So I would say to my colleagues, if you think you are helping this process, you are hurting it. You are trying to take away the negotiating power of the State Department to make sure that environmental and public interest issues are addressed here.

Now I know my colleague, whom I look forward to working with on the energy committee, thinks his legislation has protected something in the area of property rights, but let me be clear: This legislation ensures that the status quo in Nebraska under the Supreme Court decision last week will stand. It simply affirms that the use of eminent domain on behalf of TransCanada will be the law. So we are not doing anything in this legislation to protect them. Jamming Keystone XL onto the temporary payroll tax cut bill was a mistake, and the bill today is also a mistake. This bill says, ''Don't try to answer all of these questions that we think the State Department should decide in our national interest.'' The President should have the ability to say yes or no on this.

I would like the President to answer these questions as they relate to the tar sands oil in water, only because I had a chance to ask the Commandant of the Coast Guard a year ago about this issue. We are very concerned about the transport of tar sands out of the Pacific Northwest. The commandant at that time said we have no solution—no solution. So when my colleague from Michigan talked about the $1.2 billion that was spent on tar sands cleanup because it sank in the Kalamazoo River, I think these are issues that the State Department has every right to raise with the company to get answers on.

Just recently TransCanada has been redoing some of its pipeline in other areas because it has also found that the welds in the pipeline were not properly done. So in the State Department's Environmental Impact Statement, it required TransCanada to get a third-party validator to validate whether it was actually meeting the standards we want to see on the pipeline; but, no, our colleagues would like to interrupt that and say: We know best, just like we were ready to make it right with the Sandhills aquifer. We know best.

So I ask my colleagues not to rush a process that has been failed from the beginning, that did not allow for the public interest to be adequately afforded its right.

I don't understand what the hurry is. I do want to hurry on energy policy, but it has much more to do with getting the tax credits and clean energy incentives in place that will unleash thousands of more jobs and give predictability. That is the prerogative and the responsibility of Congress, to look at these tax incentives to establish economic incentives. It is not our job to site pipelines when the local process has not played out. At least don't stop the President from making sure these environmental issues are addressed.

My colleague from Massachusetts has been waiting, and I know he was a leader in the House of Representatives prior to his time in the Senate making sure that tar sands should pay into the oilspill liability trust fund, and I certainly appreciate his leadership on that.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. MARKEY. I rise for recognition to speak on this issue.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is recognized.

Mr. MARKEY. I thank the Presiding Officer very much and I thank the Senator from Washington for her great leadership on this issue.

We are having the beginning of an historic debate here on the floor of the U.S. Senate. We are debating whether the dirtiest oil in the world, the tar sands from Canada, is going to be brought through the United States in a pipeline, like a straw, and brought right down to Port Arthur, TX, to a tax-free export zone so that it can be exported out of the United States.

What is in it for our country?

Well, when you think about it, we are going to take the environmental risk, but the benefits flow to the Canadian companies. The benefits flow to the oil companies. This whole argument that it deals with American energy independence is false, and the way in which we are going to ensure that we are protected is that we are going to bring an amendment out here on to the Senate floor to debate whether this oil should stay in the United States. We export young men and women overseas to protect these ships coming back from the Middle East with oil. Why should we export the oil that is already in the United States when it can reduce our dependence? That is our challenge, and we must deal with that.

As well, the Canadians under existing law are exempt from paying a tax into an oilspill liability fund. That can no longer continue as well. That is upwards of $2 billion over 10 years to deal with oilspills in the United States created by Canadian oil, and they are exempt. That is wrong. That is just plain wrong. So this is a very important debate, but it goes right to the heart—let's admit it—of energy independence in the United States. That oil should not come to our country, go right through it and out. We have a responsibility to the young men and women we send around the world to not provide any false advertising about this oil and where it is going to go.

NET NEUTRALITY

Secondly, I want to talk a little bit about net neutrality. We are coming up to the first anniversary of the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals striking down the rules the Federal Communications Commission had put on the books to protect the Internet, to ensure that it is open, that it is entrepreneurial. Network neutrality is just a fancy word for nondiscrimination, just a fancy word for saying that it is open, that entrepreneurs, that smaller voices have access, so they cannot be blocked by communications behemoths. This is an issue that goes right to the heart of job creation in the United States of America.

Consider this. In 2013, 60 percent of all of the venture capital funds invested in the United States of America went toward Internet-specific and software companies. That is all you have to know. That is 60 percent of all venture capital money. That is why 4 million people have registered with the Federal Communications Commission their views that net neutrality is central to this entrepreneurial activity in our country. The FCC is going to promulgate or announce the beginning of the promulgation of new regulations in February. We are on the first anniversary right now of the rules having been struck down. There are none.

From my perspective, this goes right to the heart of the new generation of companies. Yes, we have Google and eBay and Amazon and YouTube and all rest of these first-generation companies, but there are new companies like Dwolla and Etsy that are at the heart of the new job creation, and we have to make sure they and others like them are not denied access.

So, in both of these issues, net neutrality and on the pipeline issue coming down from Canada, it is all about

job creation. It is all about making sure that if America is going to take the risk, America should get the benefit. And it is not going to on the pipeline issue. It is not. This is the dirtiest oil in the world. This is going to contribute to dangerous global warming.

Yet the oil companies are going to be able to sell it out on the open market. And why? Because the price of a barrel of oil on the open market is $17 higher than it is in Canada. You don't have to go to a business school to figure out this model. Get it out and onto the open seas, sell it to China, sell it to Latin America, sell it to other countries around the world. That is what this is all about. That is what is at the heart of this entire Keystone Pipeline agenda.

It is wrong for us to be short-circuiting a process that will guarantee that the environment of our country, the environment of our planet is, in fact, protected by the President and by the process that has been put in place.

I am so glad we are finally having this debate to make sure we put all of the facts out on the table.

I yield back the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to be recognized for up to 4 minutes, followed by Senator SHAHEEN.

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

(The remarks of Mr. ISAKSON and Mrs. SHAHEEN pertaining to the introduction of S. 150 are printed in today's RECORD under ''Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.'')

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, before I speak, I have two unanimous consent requests: No. 1, that Senator WHITEHOUSE be allowed to follow me and, No. 2, that my remarks not break up the debate on the pipeline bill.

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

(The remarks of Mr. GRASSLEY are printed in today's RECORD under ''Morning Business.'')

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, with all of the issues our country faces, here we are debating a Canadian pipeline. What are we doing? A new majority has taken over the Senate and their first bill—their opening gambit—is the Keystone Pipeline. What is going on?

Is it about jobs? There has been an awful lot of talk about jobs over the last couple of days, but this opening gambit—both obviously and demonstrably—has nothing to do about jobs. If this were about jobs, instead bring up the Shaheen-Portman energy efficiency bill, the bipartisan bill the Republicans spiked last year. That bill has been estimated to produce nearly 200,000 jobs, more than quadruple the 42,000 jobs supported by the construction of the pipeline.

If this were about jobs, bring up the highway bill, which came out of EPW unanimously last year. That bill was estimated to support 3 million jobs a year, 70 times the number of jobs the Keystone Pipeline will produce. Forty-two thousand is a pittance compared to that.

Right now the economy is adding over 70,000 jobs every week. In the 3 weeks we spend arguing about this bill, we will add five times as many jobs as the Keystone Pipeline would provide. We matched Keystone in just 4 average days of job growth. Yet we are going to spend 3 weeks on this issue?

If this were truly about jobs, bring up an infrastructure bill—the kind our Republican friends have relentlessly stymied when they were in the minority. Set up an infrastructure fund. God knows wherever we look American infrastructure is crumbling. Schools, airports, trains, water, health information infrastructure, smart grids, and broadband are all yearning for activity.

We could do very big things on jobs. We get 13,000 jobs on average for every $1 billion spent on infrastructure, and we need the infrastructure, but instead we are doing this. It is definitely not about jobs.

Is it about the merits of the pipeline? Hardly. With oil prices at $50 per barrel, it is not even clear that the pipeline is viable. The State Department calculated that crude oil prices below $75 per barrel would limit the development of tar sands crude.

According to a recent report from the Canadian Energy Research Institute, due to a steep increase in production costs, new tar sands projects require crude prices of at least $85 per barrel to break even. We are around $50 per barrel. The U.S. Energy Information Agency predicts that crude oil prices will average below $65 well into 2015.

Shell, Total, and Statoil have all canceled or postponed major tar sands expansion projects. Southern Pacific Resources has nearly gone broke transporting heavy crude to the gulf by rail. The Canexus terminal in Alberta has run far below capacity, plagued by logistical problems, lost contracts with developers, and has been put up for sale. At $50 per barrel this pipeline could already be a zombie pipeline—dead man walking.

Moreover, Keystone XL would be an environmental disaster. Notwithstanding the talking points to the contrary, the facts prove otherwise. As a source of carbon pollution alone, it will produce the equivalent of as many as 6 million added cars on our roads for 50 years. That is enough added carbon pollution to erase 70 percent of the carbon reductions from the recent motor vehicle emission standards that the automobile companies agreed to.

The cost of that carbon pollution adds up. Using official U.S. estimates of the social cost of carbon, the economic damage of the emissions from the Keystone Pipeline will amount to $128 billion in harm over the lifetime of the project. These are enormous costs that we will pay, borne out as parched farmland, harms to our health, and flooded businesses and homes. It is not about jobs and it is not about the merits of this pipeline. Unfortunately, it is not even a venue for a serious discussion about climate change—for a conversation about what carbon pollution is doing to our atmosphere and oceans.

In all of last week's conversation about the Keystone Pipeline tar sands bill, the number of times Republicans mentioned climate change was exactly one time, and that was only when Chairman MURKOWSKI summarized testimony submitted to her energy committee by an opponent of the pipeline. She used the term while describing the witness's testimony. There was one reference to a Democratic witness's committee testimony, and that is it. There were ''zero'' serious conversations.

We are long past time for a serious bipartisan conversation about carbon pollution and climate change. What a great thing it would be if part of the new majority's new responsibility was just to take an honest look at those issues. But for sure this isn't that. Republicans remain politically incapable of addressing climate change. Forget addressing climate change, Republicans remain politically incapable of even discussing it.

It is not jobs, it is not the merits of the pipeline, it is not an opening on carbon pollution and climate change, and the President has already told us he is going to veto this bill.

What the heck are we doing? I will tell you what I think we are doing—and I think the facts support this conclusion—but first what you have to understand to understand what is going on is that the Republican Party has become the political wing of the fossil fuels industry. There has always been a trend of this within the Republican Party, but since the Republican appointees on the Supreme Court gave the fossil fuel industry the great, fat, juicy gift of its Citizens United decision, fossil fuel industry control over the Republican Party in Congress has become near absolute.

According to the Center for American Progress, the fossil fuel industry spent nearly three-quarters of $1 billion over the last 2 years on lobbying and direct and third-party campaign contributions. That is just what is reported. That doesn't even count the anonymous dark money that is preferred by many special interest donors. It certainly doesn't include the pungent fact that even if a special interest never spends the money, just quiet, private, backroom threats of attack ads can influence political behavior.

We can argue this point more on another day. I have talked about it frequently, and I think I have made the case pretty convincingly in other ''Time to Wake Up'' speeches that the evidence points to this as the present state of affairs within the Republican Party. So for purposes of this discussion, take it as my premise, anyway,

that the Republican Party in Congress is now effectively the political wing of the fossil fuel industry.

That premise clarifies what is happening here. The fossil fuel industry has a shiny new Republican Senate majority, and it wants to take it out for a spin. It wants to take its new Republican-controlled Congress out for a spin. That is what this Keystone opening gambit is all about. This is somewhere between performance art, a show of obedience, and a show of force.

Well, fine. Take us out for a spin. Have your fun. But the laws of nature that turn carbon pollution into climate change and into ocean acidification aren't going away. God laid down those laws, and they are not subject to repeal by man. Ignore them all you want. Worship at the altar of the fossil fuel Baal all you want, but there will be a price to pay for this negligence and inaction. It is truly time for this body to wake up.

I yield the floor.

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

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

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

CUBA POLICY

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I rise to say that nothing has changed in Cuba since Cuban arms were captured on this North Korean ship going through the Panama Canal a year and a half ago, just after the Obama administration started its secret negotiations with the Cuban Government—not the regime, not its mindset, nor its oppression of its people.

This is the essence of the regime. They put this missile system and MiGs in a container ship going through the Panama Canal, hid them under tons of sugar in violation of U.S. Security Council resolutions. It was the most significant violation of security council resolutions as its relates to North Korea in quite some time, and certainly the biggest violator in all of the Western Hemisphere.

We could not trust the Castro regime then, and we cannot trust it now. What we can trust are the voices of those who promote human rights and democracy who have been arrested and rearrested time and time again, year after year, for demanding nothing more than their ability to speak their minds freely, openly, and without fear.

Voices such as Berta Soler, the leader of the Ladies in White—the Ladies in White are a group of women who each Sunday travel to mass dressed in white, normally holding a gladiola—peacefully. These are women whose husbands or sons languish in Castro's jail simply because of their political views. And as they march to church, they are savagely beaten by state security.

Berta Soler, the leader of the Ladies in White, said:

> Sadly, President Obama made the wrong decision. The freedom and democracy of the Cuban people will not be achieved through these benefits that he's giving—not to the Cuban people—but to the Cuban government.
>
> The Cuban government will only take advantage to strengthen its repressive machinery, to repress civil society, its people and remain in power.

Or the voice of Yoani Sanchez, a prominent Cuban blogger and independent journalist, who said, ''Alan Gross was not arrested for what he did but for what could be gained for his arrest. He was simply bait and they were aware of it from the beginning. Castroism has won, though the positive result is that Alan Gross has left alive the prison that threatened to become his tomb.''

Or the voice of Rosa Maria Paya, the daughter of Oswaldo Paya, the island's most prominent and respected human rights advocate, who was killed in what the regime calls an automobile accident, what many of us call an assassination. His whole effort was under the existing Cuban Constitution to petition his government under that constitution for changes in the government, of which he amassed thousands of signatures of average Cubans across the island, and the regime saw that as such a threat that he was run off the road and, sadly, killed.

His daughter Rosa Maria Paya said:

> The Cuban people are being ignored in this secret conversation, in this secret agreement that we learned today. The reality of my country is there is just one party with all the control and with the state security controlling the whole society.
>
> If this doesn't change, there's no real change in Cuba. Not even with access to Internet. Not even when Cuban people can travel more than two years ago. Not even that is a sign of the end of the totalitarianism in my country.

Or another voice, the voice of Sakharov prize winner Guillermo Farinas, who spoke for many Cuban dissidents when he said this:

> Alan Gross was used as a tool by the Castro regime to coerce the United States. Obama was not considerate of Cuban citizens and of the civil society that is facing this tyrannical regime.
>
> In Miami, Obama promised he would consult Cuba measures with civil society and the non-violent opposition. Obviously, this didn't happen. That is a fact, a reality. He didn't consider Cuba's democrats. The betrayal of Cuba's democrats has been consummated.

As you can see, Farinas is in the midst of being arrested by state security simply for a peaceful protest.

Or the powerful voice of the husband of Berta Soler, Angel Moya, a former political prisoner of the Black Spring in 2003 when Fidel Castro imprisoned 75, including 29 journalists along with librarians and democracy activists. He said this:

> The Obama Administration has ceded before Castro's dictatorship. Nothing has changed. The jails remain filled, the government represents only one family, repression continues, civil society is not recognized and we have no right to assemble or protest.
>
> The measures that the government of the United States has implemented today, to ease the embargo and establish diplomatic relations with Cuba, will in no way benefit the Cuban people. The steps taken will strengthen the Castro regime's repression against human rights activists and increase its resources, so the security forces can keep harassing and repressing civil society.

These are the voices of those who languished inside the belly of the beast. These are the voices not of this romantic image that some have of Castro's Cuba but of the reality, the harsh reality—people who, simply to be able to promote the basic freedoms that we enjoy here in the United States and most people in the Western world, are constantly thrown into jail for long periods of time, beaten and oppressed.

Those are the voices of freedom inside of Cuba. These are the men and women who have been arrested and suffered under the oppressive hand of the Cuban regime for the belief in the right of all Cubans to be free. These are the people who know that nothing—nothing—has changed. The regime, after reaping the benefits of what in my view is a bad deal, is still arresting peaceful protesters, including more than 50 at the end of December.

As a matter of fact, on New Year's Eve when most of us were celebrating the advent of the new year, there was an effort inside of Cuba. Tania Bruguera and a series of other human rights activists and political democracy activists were going to hold in Revolution Square a 1-minute opportunity for any Cuban who wanted to come forth and talk about what they aspired to for their freedom, what they aspired to for the Cuba of tomorrow to be. It was going to be a peaceful demonstration and an exposition of the hopes and dreams and aspirations of Cuba's political dissidents and human rights activists inside their country. In that peaceful effort, dozens of human rights activists and political dissidents, including the organizers, were arrested before they ever got to the event. The event was totally suppressed.

Weeks after the administration's deal with the Castro regime—even then—the simple act of speaking for 1 minute about what your views would be of the future were repressed. So let me say that while I welcome the news that Cuba has released 53 political prisoners and that the administration has finally shared the list of names it negotiated with the Castro regime, this entire process has been shrouded in secrecy.

Reuters reports that the administration officials said the list was created in June or July. But some of the 53 were released well before June, before the list was supposedly put together. As a matter of fact, 14, to be exact, were released 6 to 8 months before the December 17 announcement. One was released over a year ago.

So, clearly, the list that supposedly was put together by the administration with the regime could not have envisioned or could not take credit for

those who were released well before the list was put together. Many had simply finished their unjust prison terms. Clearly, keeping the list secret provided the regime the flexibility to define ''mission accomplished.'' The fact is, the release of 53 political prisoners does not mean there are no longer political prisoners inside of Cuba. Human rights groups had stated, prior to the President's speech in December, that there were over 100 long-term political prisoners in the country, and there were 8,900—to be exact, 8,889—political detentions in Cuba last year—an appalling number—8,889.

In short, while 53 political prisoners have been let out of jail, the same corrupt jailer is still ruling the country. The Castros have a long history. I have followed this not only for all of my career of 23 years in the Congress, but even before that. They have a long history of rearresting these political and human rights activists whom they previously released.

Mr. President, how much time do I have remaining?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is 1 minute remaining under Democratic control.

Mr. MENENDEZ. I ask unanimous consent to be able to continue for about 10 minutes.

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

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, the fact is that as someone who has spoken out time and again on the brutal repression of the Cuban people under the Castro regime, someone whose family has suffered the consequences, I believe the agreement this administration has reached with the Castro regime is one-sided and misguided. It fails to understand the nature of the regime that has exerted its authoritarian control over the Cuban people for over 55 years. Now, no one wishes that the reality in Cuba were more different than the Cuban people and Cuban Americans that have fled the island in search of freedom.

In December, the same month that the President announced changes to U.S. policies, the Cuban Commission for Human Rights and National Reconciliation, a group that works within Cuba, documented 489 political arrests, bringing the total number of political arrests during the first 11 months of 2014 to nearly 8,900.

This is the regime that imprisoned an American citizen for 5 years for distributing communications equipment on the island. Releasing political prisoners today in Cuba is meaningless if tomorrow these individuals can be arrested again and denied the right to peacefully pursue change in their own country. It is a fallacy that Cuba will change just because an American President believes that if he extends his hand in peace, the Castro brothers will suddenly unclench their fists.

As you see from the quotes I have read, a majority of democracy activists on the island, many whom I have met with in the past, have been explicit that they want the United States to become open to Cuba only when there is a reciprocal movement by the Castro brothers. They understand that the Castros will not accede to change in any other way. In my view and in theirs, the United States has thrown the Cuban regime an economic lifeline. With the collapse of the Venezuelan economy, Cuba is losing its main benefactor, but it will now receive the support of the United States, the greatest democracy in the world.

This is a reward that a totalitarian regime does not deserve. It is a reward that at the end of the day perpetuates the Castro regime's decades of repression. The regulatory changes the regime has won, which are clearly intended to circumvent the intent and spirit of U.S. law and the U.S. Congress, present a false narrative about Cuba that suggests that the United States and not the regime is responsible for its economic failure. So let's be clear. Cuba's economic struggles are 100 percent attributable to a half century of failed political and economic experiments that have suffocated Cuban entrepreneurs. In Cuba private business is controlled by the Cuban government—most significantly the military—with the benefits flowing directly to the regime's political and military leaders.

Cuba has the same political and economic relations with most of the world. But companies choose not to engage because of political, economic, and even criminal risks associated with investment on the island, as exhibited by the arbitrary arrests of several foreign investors from Canada, England, and Panama in just recent years.

To also suggest that Cuba should be taken off the list of state sponsors of terrorism is alarming while Cuba harbors American fugitives such as Joanne Chesimard, a cop killer who is on the FBI's list of most wanted terrorists for murdering New Jersey State Trooper Werner Foerster. She is not the only one who is a cop killer inside of Cuba from the United States. There is also Cuba's colluding with North Korea, as I showed before, to smuggle jets, missile batteries, and arms through the Panama Canal in violation of the U.N. Security Council resolution, and for giving refuge to members of FARC from Colombia and members of ETA from Spain, groups that the State Departments has recognized as foreign terrorist organizations.

Now, finally with respect to the President's decision to attend the Summit of the Americans, I am extraordinarily disappointed that we intend to violate our own principles laid down in the Inter-American Democratic Charter in 2001, on the Summit being a forum for the hemisphere's democratically elected leaders. This action disavows the charter, and it sends the global message about the low priority that we place on democracy and respect for human and civil rights.

So in this new Congress I urge my distinguished colleague, the now chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Senator CORKER, to hold hearings on this dramatic and mistaken change in policy. I will keep coming to this floor to address at length all of the issues I have raised. I will come to this floor again and again to expose one of the most oppressive, repressive, and undemocratic regimes in the world.

To those of my colleagues who herald this agreement and for those in the press who still live with the mistaken romanticism of the Castros' revolution and who speak out about human rights abuses and democratic movements all over the world, it is so hypocritical to be so silent—a deafening silence when it comes to the democratic and human rights movement inside of Cuba.

I have listened to many eloquent speeches of my colleagues about human rights violations and democracy movements in many parts of the world. But on Cuba their silence is deafening.

This does not end here. It does not end today with one speech. It surely will not end until the people of Cuba are truly free.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 15 minutes.

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

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I wish today to address S. 1, which would approve construction of the Keystone Pipeline to transport tar sands heavy oil from Canada to the gulf coast. The key consideration is whether this bill, by authorizing the pipeline, would contribute significantly to global warming, which is already damaging our rural resources and our future economic prospects with profound consequences for families in America and around the world.

Also, are there better ways to create jobs that would enhance rather than damage our economy? In the words of President Theodore Roosevelt, ''Of all the questions which can come before this nation, short of the actual preservation of its existence in a great war, there is none which compares in importance with the great central task of leaving this land even a better land for our descendants than it is for us.''

Let's start by examining the impact of the Keystone Pipeline on atmospheric carbon dioxide pollution and global warming. This chart displays the variations in carbon dioxide that have occurred over time, back through the last 800,000 years. We have seen that carbon dioxide levels have gone up and down within a modest range until modern times and the Industrial revolution.

At that point, where they continued to oscillate as they have in the past, we see a steady, upward progress into a realm not seen within these last 800,000

years. This is the impact simply of human kind pulling up a lot of fossil fuel out of the ground and burning it—whether it comes in the form of coal or it comes in the form of oil or it comes in the form of gas.

Now, let's take a look and see how the temperature of the planet has corresponded with the levels of carbon dioxide. What we find, going back in time, is a very strong correlation with the carbon dioxide in red and temperature change in blue—a very close correlation between carbon dioxide around our planet and the temperature of the planet.

Well, this makes enormous sense since any high school student can establish in the laboratory that carbon dioxide has thermal properties in trapping heat. As less heat radiates from the Earth, the Earth warms. Well, this certainly bears upon our stewardship of this planet. By many estimates, to contain global warming to 2 degrees Celsius—that is just shy of 3.9 degrees Fahrenheit—human civilization must transition aggressively and rapidly away from conventional fossil fuels and toward the use of nonfossil, renewable energy.

Now, this shift is within our power. It is a challenge presented by this circumstance and by our stewardship of human civilization on this planet. But are we up to the task? Do we have the political will to undertake responsible stewardship of our beautiful blue-green Earth? That is the test that stands before this body—this Senate—at this very moment.

Building the Keystone Pipeline, which opens the faucet to rapid exploitation of massive new unconventional fossil reserves—the tar sands—takes us in the exact opposite direction from where we need to go. It locks us into the dirtiest fossil fuels on the planet for a generation. It accelerates human civilization down the road to catastrophic climate change.

That is why building the Keystone Pipeline is a mistake. There is a lot at stake. Global warming is not some imaginary concept based on computer models or something that might happen 50 to 100 years from now. Indeed, global warming is not only present right now, but it is already making vast changes in State after State, and nation after nation.

The warmest 10 years on record for global average surface temperature have occurred in the last 12 years. Let me repeat that. The warmest 10 years on record for global average surface temperature have occurred in the last 12 years. That is pretty powerful evidence that something dramatic is occurring. The effects can be seen in every State. The average forest fire season in the United States is getting longer. Since the 1980s the season has grown by 60 to 80 days. That is 2 to 3 months of additional fire season. The average amount of acres consumed annually by wildfires has doubled to more than 7 million acres.

One study estimates that global warming, through the combined impact of greater pine beetle infestation and the greater number of forest fires and more severe forest fires will decimate the western forests of the United States by the end of this century. That is not the only impact that we are seeing. In addition, the snowpack in our mountains—in our Cascade Mountains—is decreasing, which means smaller and warmer trout streams. That is not good for fishing.

It means less water for irrigation—not good for farming. The Klamath Basin, a major agricultural basin in Oregon, has suffered through many years and three horrific droughts just since 2001, in substantial part, because of the lower snowpack.

This chart, which shows Washington State, Oregon, Idaho, and Montana, shows the areas of intensity of the decrease in snowpack. The decreases are circled in red and the increases in the snowpack are circled in blue. As you can see, the decreasing snowpacks vastly, vastly outweigh the occasional spots where there have been reported increases.

This translates to the types of droughts we have been seeing in the Klamath Basin, in this area of southern Oregon, and the droughts we have seen in northern California, a very significant impact on agriculture.

So when some are critical on this floor—some climate deniers who choose to ignore all of the facts on the ground and say there is no impact and no harm—well, they simply are putting forth a myth designed to serve the oil, fossil fuel, and coal industries in order to advance those powerful special interests.

Well, I have a special interest. That special interest is the people of Oregon, who are being impacted by the longer forest fires, who are being impacted by the droughts. I have a special interest. It is called planet Earth. That trumps the Koch brothers, that trumps the coal industry, that trumps the oil industry.

There are other impacts that we are seeing. One is the impact on our oceans. As the high levels of carbon dioxide in the air interact through wave action with the ocean, the ocean absorbs some of that carbon dioxide. As it absorbs that carbon dioxide, it becomes carbonic acid. Here we see some charts from Hawaii. In the purple here we have the change in atmospheric carbon dioxide over a 50-year period.

Then we have measurements of carbon dioxide in blue in the water. Then we have the measurements, over that same period, of the pH or acidic content of the oceans. What we are seeing is that as the pH level drops, that means that the oceans are more acidic. Now, what happens when the ocean is more acidic? It affects the coral reefs, for one. Coral reefs are very sensitive to this. We have seen, from scientists who are studying coral reefs, significant damage both from water temperatures and from increasing acidity.

One scientist from Oregon State University who studies coral reefs around the world came here to DC and presented a series of slides showing the reefs he studied. He said: These are my babies and my babies are dying. Those coral reefs are the basic food chain for a significant amount of sea life that is harvested for human consumption. To put it differently, fishing families around the world often depend on the coral reefs to sustain the foundation of their livelihood.

Off the Pacific coast, we are seeing a big impact on our oysters. The Whiskey Creek shellfish hatchery started having trouble in 2008 with the growth of its baby oysters that are known as oyster seeds. I visited that hatchery 3 months ago to hear their story about what they had faced.

At first they thought: Well, maybe this problem is from a bacteria. Maybe this problem is from a virus. Maybe this is from something else. They brought in Oregon State University to research and they figured out that it was, in fact, the acidity of the water, the very acidity that I just showed you the chart about.

The acidity does not happen in just one place. It is happening broadly across the world. The oyster seed—if they are having trouble fixing their shells because of the high acidity in the water, well then what else is going on? The oysters—here are some headlines related to the oysters.

Up in Washington State, the Seattle Times reported: ''Oysters dying as coast is hit hard.'' In fact, I was flipping through channels a month or 2 ago, and there was the Governor of Washington over at a hatchery on the coast of Washington, just like I visited Whiskey Creek Hatchery in Oregon. It is the same story. Oysters are dying. Why? Because of the acidity of the water.

This is a headline from the Los Angeles Times: ''Oceans' rising acidity a threat to shellfish—and humans.''

From Oregon: ''Researchers scramble to deal with dying Northwest oysters.''

So for my colleagues who want to wreak this kind of harm to our farms, to our fisheries, and to our forests, how about you figure out from the folks of your State how to pay for the damage being done in my State to our forests, our fishing, and our farming. How about you figure out how to pay for the damage being done throughout the United States and throughout the planet. You want to unleash the dirtiest oil in the world from the tar sands and increase this damage? Tell me how you are going to compensate those who are injured across this Nation and across the world.

I hear a lot of comments about responsibility. I hear a lot of comments from my colleagues across the aisle about accountability. Put your actions where your statements are and show us some accountability for the damage you are wreaking by approving this pipeline, by voting for this pipeline.

Does this bill before us, which would open the faucet on a massive new reserve of fossil fuels, advance the stewardship of the planet? Does it advance our rural economy? Clearly the answer is no. Stewardship, accountability, and responsibility would insist that we not open this faucet to further damage of the kind we are seeing right now, that we not unlock the tar sands.

But proponents of the pipeline say: Wait, we have some arguments on our side. Let's examine those arguments.

First they say: You know, this will create 4,000 construction jobs.

Well, let's take a look at this chart. This is a chart that shows the Keystone—roughly 4,000 construction jobs. That represents this little tiny line at the bottom, if you can even see it.

Now let's talk about the Rebuild America Act, which colleagues across the aisle filibustered in order to kill it even though it was revenue neutral. That is how many jobs the Rebuild America Act would create.

If you want to talk jobs, let's talk about a jobs bill. Let's substitute the Rebuild America Act for the Keystone act. Let's have a real jobs bill, a real stimulus bill, a bill that would put people to work in construction across this Nation in a way more intense fashion than would the Keystone bill.

Proponents have a second argument. They say that bringing this additional oil from Canada down to the Gulf of Mexico will increase our national security because all that oil will be refined and utilized in the United States.

Well, my colleagues are a little confused about this. They haven't thought about why it is Canada wants to ship it to a gulf port—so that it can have access to world markets, so that it can get the world market price. Our refineries in the gulf coast are largely fully occupied now. An additional supply of crude means additional crude you can export to other countries that have refineries that are short of supply. Well, that is profitable to Canada, but that doesn't mean the oil will get used in the United States.

They say: But wait a minute, some of it might get refined and utilized in the U.S. system.

Well, let's acknowledge that some of it might get refined, albeit it is clear why the oil is being shipped to the gulf coast because it is being shipped there to get into the world market and be available for export to the world. Let's say some of it might happen to be utilized in the United States. That little bit of impact is nothing compared to what we can do by investment in renewable energy that would decrease our reliance on fossil fuels. So a far better solution would be investing in renewable, non-fossil fuel energy that doesn't have the impact on the fishing, the farming, and the forests.

But, say proponents, if the Keystone Pipeline is not built, an alternative pipeline will be built through Canada.

Well, that is certainly highly questionable. If it were easier and cheaper to go through Canada, TransCanada would not be seeking to build the Keystone Pipeline.

Oh, they say, they will figure out a way to run a pipeline west to the Pacific.

But you know that has to pass through First Nation lands, and it has to have all kinds of approvals. And there are folks in Canada who actually feel as deeply and passionately about being good stewards of our planet and not contributing to the assault on our forests, our farming, and fishing as many of us here feel, and there is going to be intense opposition. That is why TransCanada wants to push this through the United States in order to reach the world market and the gulf coast. It is cheaper and easier, and they have no confidence they can build a pipeline to substitute.

Opponents say: If it is not shipped by pipeline, it will be shipped by railroad—which, of course, is again way off the fact track because the railroads are already congested, making additional capacity modest at best. In addition, the price point for shipping by rail is much higher than the price point for shipping by pipeline. If you change the price of the pipeline, you change the supply and demand curve, and you don't end up producing the same amount of oil.

So these arguments made are thin efforts to camouflage a fundamental fact that this is a great deal for TransCanada, it is a great deal for the oil industry, and it is a terrible deal for Americans depending on rural resources, a terrible deal for our oceans and our fisheries, a terrible deal for our forests, and a terrible deal for our farming.

So if you care about the future economy of the United States, if you care about rural America, if you care about all of us who depend on rural America for these wonderful and important resources, then you will oppose this pipeline.

There is no question, this is a sweetheart deal. Talk about accountability? TransCanada won't even have to pay into the oilspill liability fund. They are being exempted from that fund. They do not have to pay into the insurance fund that will help clean up when their pipeline leaks. And they all leak. That is outrageous. You want accountability? Put forward the amendment that says they would have to pay into the oilspill liability fund, the same as any other person or group pumping oil through a pipeline in the United States. Say that they would be fully responsible for every bit of damage that local governments and State governments and the U.S. Government have to pay for to compensate for the damage created by those oilspills. Let's hear some responsibility and accountability from the proponents of this pipeline, not this sweetheart deal for a Canadian company.

Tackling carbon pollution—global warming—is going to take an enormous amount of international cooperation. Just recently, the United States and China entered into an agreement to address global climate change. President Obama announced the goal of cutting American net greenhouse gas emissions 26 to 28 percent below 2005 levels by 2025. The Chinese President announced that China would invest heavily in renewable energy to generate 20 percent of China's energy from nonfossil sources by 2030 and would seek to decrease China's CO_2 emissions thereafter.

These goals will require significant efforts by the United States and massive investments by China. Do they go far enough? No, not in the context of the challenge faced because of our elevated carbon dioxide levels around the world, but this agreement by the two biggest carbon polluters among nations is a significant step forward. It is the type of leadership the world has been asking for.

We cannot simply wish for nations to work together, we have to do our part. That is why we should be talking today not about how to turn on the tap for the dirtiest oil on the planet but how to work with other nations to invest in energy conservation, to invest in nonfossil fuel renewable energy.

Let's turn back to the test President Theodore Roosevelt put before us. He said that there is no more important mission than ''leaving this land even a better land for our descendents than it is for us.'' That is the challenge. Let's rise to that challenge.

Mr. President, let's rise to that challenge. Help lead your colleagues—all of us—in stopping this assault on our farms, our fishing, and our forestry. Stop this sweetheart deal for a Canadian company, and let's substitute a real jobs bill, a rebuild America jobs bill that will create more than a hundredfold more construction jobs than the jobs we have before us.

When we think about the complete lack of accountability and responsibility embedded in this bill, when we think about the enormous damage that comes from turning on the faucet to the dirtiest oil in the world, there really is only one way to vote on this bill, and that is to vote no.

I yield the floor.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:56 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. PORTMAN).

KEYSTONE XL PIPELINE ACT—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

HELP COMMITTEE AGENDA

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I am here today to talk about the work