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

of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions. It is an important committee. Senator Ted Kennedy, who served for many years as the chairman of the HELP Committee, as we call it, once said that the HELP Committee had 30 percent of the legislative jurisdiction of the Senate. If you think about it, health, education, labor, and pensions—the work we do touches the lives of virtually every American.

During the last 2 years, I had the privilege of being the ranking Republican on the committee. The Senator from Iowa, Tom Harkin, was the chairman. I think most people would agree we have as ideologically diverse a committee as any committee in the Senate, but we worked very well together. Where we disagreed, which was often, we simply stated our piece and we voted. But we looked for opportunities to agree, and last Congress, we passed 25 bills through the committee that became law. I am not sure any other committee can say that.

I look forward to a similar productive working relationship with the Senator from Washington, Mrs. MURRAY. She is an experienced legislator, cares deeply about education, health, labor, and pensions, and has proven she knows how to successfully negotiate. We are operating today under a budget agreement that she helped negotiate with Congressman PAUL RYAN in the House. I am hopeful Senator MURRAY and I can work together in the same successful manner that I did with Senator Harkin last Congress.

I have now visited with almost all of the members of the committee, Democrat and Republican, and I feel confident we can successfully work together.

Here are my goals for the next 2 years. I have the privilege of being the chairman of the committee. The job of the chairman is to set the committee's agenda and work with all members of the committee on that agenda. This Congress, all members, before and during hearings, will have a full chance to discuss and amend legislation related to the agenda. When we report a bill to the floor, there will be an opportunity for a robust amendment process, as Senator MCCONNELL has said. Then, I hope we will go to conference with the House of Representatives on our bill, where there will be further discussion. The challenge in passing legislation is there will have to be 60 votes to move a bill out of the Senate, 60 votes to move to conference on the bill, and 60 votes to pass a bill in the end. To accomplish that takes working with all Senators, including those on the other side of the aisle.

I also know if we want a bill to become law, President Obama must sign it. On the major issues we plan to address, we hope to work with him to gain his signature.

My first priority as chairman will be to fix No Child Left Behind. The law is over 7 years expired, and we have been working to reauthorize it for 6 years. The law has become unworkable. States are struggling. As a result, we need to act.

The Secretary of Education gave a fine speech yesterday saying we need to act on No Child Left Behind. I agree with him. I intend to finish this work in the first few months of this year.

Second, we need to reauthorize the Higher Education Act and deregulate higher education. We need to simplify and streamline the regulations that are imposed on 6,000 colleges and universities. One of the committee members is ELIZABETH WARREN, the Senator from Massachusetts. When she was at the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, she said she would like a one-page mortgage application. A multipage mortgage application is not consumer friendly, but a two or three page one provides the consumer with information in a more easily understood manner. I think we could do the same with the application for federal aid, and there is substantial room for bipartisan agreement on this in higher education.

Just last week, I introduced legislation with Senators BENNET of Colorado, BOOKER of New Jersey, KING of Maine, ISAKSON of Georgia and BURR of North Carolina, to make it easier for students to go to college by simplifying the complicated, dreaded FASFA. The FASFA is the 108-question application form that 20 million American families fill out every year. The President talked about it on his visit to Tennessee on Friday. He also thinks it is too long and wants to simplify it. I think higher education is an area on which we can work together in the Senate and with the President.

The third thing I would like to do is to modernize the Food and Drug Administration. Now, there is a great opportunity, working with the House and with the President, to take a good look at the FDA, to take a good look at the modern world of medical devices and personalized medicines, and to say: What do we need to do to make it easier to get treatments, medical devices, and cures through the FDA process quickly and effectively while ensuring those treatments, medical devices, and cures are safe so they can help people? This sort of work literally would affect every single American.

Fixing No Child Left Behind would affect 50 million schoolchildren, millions of teachers, and 100,000 public schools. Reauthorizing the Higher Education Act and making its regulations simpler would affect 6,000 institutions of all kinds and over 20 million students across this country. If we worked together with the House and the President to reform the FDA, we could affect the lives of every American and people all over the world by the kinds of treatments and devices and cures we bring to market.

Those are my top 3 priorities. Of course, we also want to deal with the Affordable Care Act, or ObamaCare. On this side of the aisle, we would like to repeal it, and I am sure there will be that vote. I also hope, in the words of the Senator from Wisconsin, RON JOHNSON, we move as rapidly and as responsibly as we can to repair the damage that ObamaCare has done. One example to improve ObamaCare would be to redefine full-time work from 30 hours to 40 hours. That would give about 2.5 million low-wage employees in America a pretty big pay raise when they go from 27 hours or 28 hours to 37 or 38 hours, which is what they would be able to do if full-time work were defined, as it is for everything else, as 40 hours.

We will have our first hearing on that on a bipartisan bill in the HELP Committee on next Thursday—a week from Thursday. It is a bill introduced by Senators COLLINS, MURKOWSKI, DONNELLY, and MANCHIN. It is a bipartisan bill.

Our committee has a great interest in this bill. The technical jurisdiction is with the Finance Committee. But by agreement with the Finance Committee, we will have this hearing, and then we will send to the Finance Committee our opinions, and it will be up to the Finance Committee how to report the bill, whether to report it, or what version of it to report. It helps, at least on the Republican side of the aisle, that six of the members of the Finance Committee are also members of the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee.

Mr. President, let me talk about the first item on the HELP Committee agenda; the plan to fix No Child Left Behind.

I see the Senator from Washington on the floor today. She will be speaking next, and I look forward to hearing her comments. I said before she came to the floor how much I look forward to working with her. She is an experienced legislator, proven leader, and has a demonstrated record of results. I hope we are able to work together to pass No Child Left Behind.

No Child Left Behind was passed in 2001—a year before I became a Senator. It has become unworkable because Congress and the President failed to reauthorize and amend the law when it expired over 7 years ago.

Under the terms of the law, the original provisions continue, but that is what has made it unworkable. Those original provisions, if strictly applied, would label as a failing school almost every one of our 100,000 public schools. This is clearly an unintended result of the those who passed No Child Left Behind.

To avoid that unintended result, the U.S. Secretary of Education has granted waivers from the law's provisions to 42 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. This has created a second unintended consequence. In exchange for the waiver, the Secretary has told those States what their academic standards should be, what accountability systems they should use to set

performance standards, how many and what tests shall be used to measure the progress of students, how to evaluate teachers, and how to identify and intervene in low-performing schools. The Department has become, in effect, a national school board.

We have been working over the last 6 years to fix the problems of No Child Left Behind. Over the last 6 years, the Senate HELP Committee held two dozen hearings on No Child Left Behind and K–12 education. Twice the committee reported legislation to the Senate floor. In the Congress before last, we reported the Democratic majority's bill. I did not particularly like it, but Senator KIRK, Senator ENZI, and I all voted for it so we could move it to the floor, continue to work on it, and then replace the law. But it did not come to the floor. In the last session of Congress, the committee reported a bill again.

This Congress, we need to start with a specific proposal. I will put forward a Chairman's staff discussion draft, consult with all the members of the committee on the proposal, and see if we can ultimately get bipartisan agreement on the proposal.

I have already distributed to all the committee members, Republican and Democrat, copies of the Chairman's staff discussion draft. This is not a chairman's bill; it is not a Republican bill; it is the Chairman's staff discussion draft put forward as a place to start discussions.

We would like for staff of the various members of the committee to meet every day for the rest of this week and next week. They can discuss and provide feedback on each section of the bill. This will help determine areas where we agree and disagree.

Former Chairman George Miller gave some good advice on fixing No Child Left Behind. He said: Let's pass a lean bill to fix No Child Left Behind. Discussions have highlighted there are about eight or nine problems with the law. We probably can agree quickly on about four or five of those problems. There are real differences of opinion on the other three or four areas. I hope we can come to agreement on those issues in the committee, and I am going to do my best to lead that process. I am willing to spend all the time we need over the next several weeks to reach agreement.

If we cannot reach agreement in committee, then we should vote on a bill, and bring that bill to the floor. We can amend the bill there, and pass it with 60 votes. Then we can go to conference with the House, and ultimately send a bill to the President for him to sign.

I look forward to the process. A week from tomorrow, we will hold a hearing on testing and accountability. Every member of the committee is interested in this topic. Here are the questions to be examined in the hearing: are there too many tests? Who should decide how many and what tests should be administered? We need to answer some questions before we make decision to be put into a bill. In the Chairman's staff discussion draft I have circulated, I have included two options for discussion: current law testing requirements and another option that gives more flexibility to the States to decide what to do on testing.

On fixing No Child Left Behind, I plan to set realistic goals, keep the best portions of the law, and restore to States and communities the responsibility to decide whether schools and teachers are succeeding or failing.

The Chairman's staff discussion draft relies on and respects the 30 years of work by Governors and chief State school officers to develop higher standards, better tests, stronger accountability systems, and fair and effective teacher and principal evaluation programs that will allow parents and communities to know how children in our country's public schools are performing.

I have watched the development of goals, standards, tests, and teacher evaluation systems for a long period of time. I was Governor of Tennessee in 1983 when Secretary Terrell Bell in the Reagan administration issued a report called: ''A Nation at Risk.'' The report said that if a foreign country had created schools in the condition of our nation's schools, we would have considered it an act of war. At this time, Governors all over the country were working to fix state education systems, understanding that while the Federal Government has some involvement in elementary and secondary education, it only pays for about 12 percent of state budgets. Most Americans feel as though they should be in charge of their local schools, not Washington.

In 1985 and 1986, every Governor spent an entire year focused on improving schools—the first time in the history of the Governors association that it happened. I was chairman of the National Governors Association that year. The Governor of Arkansas, Bill Clinton, was the vice chairman.

In 1989, the first President Bush held a national meeting of Governors and established national education goals. Then in 1991–1992, President Bush announced Goals 2000 to help move the nation toward those goals. I was the Education Secretary at that time. States worked together to develop challenging education standards that were voluntary. States discussed teacher evaluation systems that were adopted by states such as Tennessee. In 1984, Tennessee became the first State to pay teachers more for teaching well. Washington did not dictate to Tennessee how to pay its teachers based on performance and other States began to model teacher policies in the same way. Governors began to work together on higher standards, on accountability systems, and on teacher evaluation systems.

President George W. Bush brought many of his education ideas as Governor of Texas to Washington. A large portion of those ideas were included in No Child Left Behind, such as the requirement for annual testing to determine student achievement in every school and disaggregated reporting.

President Obama created Race to the Top to give States incentives to adopt certain standards and certain tests and certain teacher evaluation systems. Since much of No Child Left Behind became unworkable in his term, Secretary Duncan provided waivers to certain aspects of the law in exchange for telling states and districts what their academic standards should be, what their accountability system should be, how to evaluate teachers, and how to intervene in low-performing schools.

These actions have created, in essence, a national school board. We need to reverse the trend toward a national school board and put responsibilities for education back with States and local communities. There is a difference of opinion about the proper balance between the federal and state role in education. I hope we can come to agreement on that balance in the committee. We need to start discussions. We have been working on fixing No Child Left Behind for 6 years, have held multiple hearings, and have reported a bill twice to the floor. 20 of the 22 members of the committee were members last year when we had hearings and reported a bill.

I think we need to identify the seven or eight issues to fix in the law, discuss each other's points of view, and see if we can fix No Child Left Behind. I look forward to that process.

The chairman's staff's discussion draft, already distributed to committee members today, will be on the committee Web site tonight so that people can see it. We will solicit feedback. Staff will work together over the next few weeks, Senators will talk, and we will see we can turn that discussion draft into a bipartisan bill. If we can, we will mark it up in committee, have amendments, and see if we can get a bipartisan result. We will then bring it to the floor for further discussion and debate. If we can't get a bipartisan bill in committee, we will still bring a bill to the floor knowing we will have to get a bipartisan vote to get it off the floor.

I am ready to get started on this process. I have talked to almost all my colleagues on the committee, and I believe they are as well.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD following my remarks a list of the nine problems the chairman's staff discussion draft identifies as the problems we should work on in trying to fix No Child Left Behind. These problems generally come from the discussions we have had over the last 6 years with the House of Representatives, and with the Secretary of Education. Identifying and discussing these problems should help us move along more rapidly.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

A PLAN TO FIX ''NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND''

''No Child Left Behind'' (NCLB) was passed in 2001. It has become unworkable because Congress and the President failed to reauthorize and amend the law when it expired over seven years ago. NCLB's original provisions, which continue in place today, would label as a ''failing school'' almost all of America's 100,000 public schools. To avoid this unintended result, the U.S. Secretary of Education has granted waivers from the law's provisions to 42 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. This has created another unintended result: in exchange for the waiver, the Secretary has told these states what their academic standards should be, what accountability systems shall be used to set performance standards, how many and what tests shall be used to measure the progress of students, how to evaluate teachers and how to identify and intervene in low performing schools.

The Department has become, in effect, a national school board.

For the last six years, the Senate and the House have worked together to try to fix ''No Child Left Behind'' In each of the last two Congresses, the Senate HELP Committee has held numerous hearings and reported legislation to fix the problems with ''No Child Left Behind.'' In 2015, the Senate HELP Committee will spend the first six weeks concluding this work and, in former Rep. George Miller's words, report a ''lean bill fixing No Child Left Behind'' ready to move to the Senate floor on Feb 23. The House of Representatives is pursuing a similar schedule.

The plan is to set realistic goals, keep the best portions of the original law, and restore to states and local communities the responsibility to decide whether local schools and teachers are succeeding or failing. The HELP Committee's bill will seek to build on thirty years of work by governors and chief state school officers to develop higher standards, better tests, stronger accountability systems, and fair and effective teacher and principal evaluation programs that will allow parents and communities to know how children in our country's public schools are performing.

1. New Goals—The 2001 goal is unworkable. Set new, realistic but challenging goals to help all students succeed.

2. High Standards—Require states to have high and challenging standards that promote college and career readiness for all students, but the federal government may not dictate or get involved with what those standards should be, or require states to submit their standards to the federal government for review or approval.

3. Reporting Progress Toward State Standards—Continue and improve disaggregated school-by-school reporting so that parents, teachers, schools, legislators, and communities know what progress schools are making.

4. State Accountability Systems—Free all public schools from the federal requirement of conforming to a federally-defined adequate yearly progress mandate and, in exchange, require states to establish accountability systems to measure school performance toward meeting the each state's standards.

5. Federal Support for the Lowest-Performing Schools—The federal government will continue to support states and local school districts in fixing schools that states determine are lowest performing.

6. Better Teaching—Encourage the creation of state and local school district teacher and principal evaluation systems, but the federal government may not dictate or get involved with the design of those systems. This will replace the current federal ''highly qualified teacher'' requirements.

7. More Local Authority To Transfer Federal Funds—Allow school districts to transfer funds more efficiently among the largest federal education programs.

8. Consolidate and Streamline Programs—Consolidate and streamline more than 60 programs within NCLB. Eliminate those that are duplicative.

9. Empower Parents—Encourage the creation and expansion of high-quality charter schools that give teachers more freedom to teach and opportunities that give parents more choices of schools for their children.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, a century ago, President Lyndon Johnson returned to his old elementary school in rural Texas with a major piece of legislation. At a picnic table on the lawn of his school and sitting beside his very first teacher, President Johnson signed into law the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, or ESEA.

Our Nation has always held the ideal of education for everyone. In 1786, Thomas Jefferson wrote:

> By far the most important bill in our whole code is that for the diffusion of knowledge among the people. No other sure foundation can be devised for the preservation of freedom and happiness.

The idea of a strong public education for every child was woven into the fabric of this Nation. But ESEA put that idea into action. It aimed to close the gaps between rich and poor, Black and White, children growing up in the crowded neighborhoods of Philadelphia, to the rural districts of Texas, children with every advantage in the world and kids with disabilities. This law moved our country in the right direction, but we still have a long way to go to close those gaps.

In the coming weeks and months, Congress will have the opportunity to make sure we continue moving our country toward this ideal and to work together to fix the broken No Child Left Behind law, because we as a nation still believe every student should have access to a quality public education, regardless of where they live or how they learn or how much money their parents make.

Education and fighting on behalf of children is what drew me to public service in the very first place. When my kids were much younger, I found out their wonderful preschool program might close because of budget cuts. I knew how valuable that program was and how much it was helping our local children, so I put my two young kids in my car and I drove off to the State capitol to explain to our legislators why they couldn't just cut this program. When I got there and was finally able to get one of the legislators to listen to me, he said something I will never forget. He said to me: You can't make a difference. You are just a mom in tennis shoes.

Well, I couldn't believe that, and I was furious. I drove all the way home telling my two little kids in the car that I was going to change that. So I got home, picked up the phone and started calling other parents, and they called other parents, and we held rallies, and we wrote letters. Finally, after it was all said and done, the legislature voted to keep the funding for that preschool program.

Throughout my career, as a preschool teacher, to serving on the local school board, the Washington State Senate, and here in the U.S. Senate, I have been committed to expanding educational opportunities and making sure every kid has someone fighting for them and their future. But that battle is far from over. Now is the time to take another big step forward, putting the ideals of our Nation into action.

The current law, No Child Left Behind, is badly broken and it is time to fix it. The good news is this doesn't have to be a partisan issue. Nearly everyone—Democrats, Republicans, teachers, parents, business leaders—agrees this law needs to be rewritten. So today I wanted to come to the floor to lay out some pretty basic but very important principles I think should guide any bill to fix No Child Left Behind.

For one, we need to work to reduce redundant and unnecessary testing so educators focus on preparing students for college and their career and also ensure we know how all of our students are progressing. We need to continue to hold schools and States accountable for delivering on the promise of a quality education for all our kids so they can compete in the 21st century economy. We need to improve our schools and give them the resources they need so every student does have the opportunity to reach their potential. And I believe we need to expand access to early childhood education so students can go to kindergarten ready to learn.

What is clear to nearly everyone is that No Child Left Behind is not working. For one, the law requires States to set high standards for schools, but it didn't give them the resources they needed to meet those achievement goals. In effect, this law set up our schools for failure. It sets teachers up for failure. It set our students up for failure. That needs to change.

I have heard from parent after parent and teacher after teacher in Washington State who have told me that not only are students taking too many tests, oftentimes the tests are of low quality and are redundant. That needs to change too.

We are still facing inequality in our education system, where some schools simply don't offer the same opportunities. For example, African-American and Latino students are significantly less likely to attend a high school that offers advanced math classes. According to the Department of Education, 30 percent fewer students from low-income backgrounds reach proficiency or higher on assessments compared to their peers of affluent backgrounds. On average, kids from low-income neighborhoods don't have access to qualified

and experienced teachers, as do students from wealthier neighborhoods. That needs to change.

The current law is not working for our States either. I have seen firsthand how No Child Left Behind is not working for my State of Washington. The law is so bad the Obama administration began issuing waivers to exempt States from the law's requirements. Washington State had received a waiver but last year it lost it. As a result, most of the schools in my home State are now categorized as failing. That means that hard-working parents sending their kids to schools in communities such as Spokane in eastern Washington, the Tri-Cities in central Washington, and Seattle, Tacoma, Everett, and many others in western Washington are receiving a letter in the mail that says their children aren't getting the type of education we expect in this country.

Not only that, but Washington now has less flexibility in how to use Federal investments in education. That needs to change.

I recently heard from a woman—her name is Lillian, who lives in Shoreline, WA—last year whose son was going into the fourth grade in the same school district where I used to serve as a school board member years ago. Her son has a learning disability. With the help of teachers and specialists in his elementary school he has shown great signs of progress. But then Lillian said she got a letter in the mail 2 weeks before school started describing the school as failing, and that left her worried about her son's education.

Because No Child Left Behind is broken, so many parents and schools and districts across the State of Washington are facing a similar uncertainty, and that is not fair to our students. That needs to change too.

It is time to rewrite No Child Left Behind with something worthy of this Nation's children and their future. In the coming weeks and months, these are some of the core principles I am going to be fighting for. Let us work with our States and districts to reduce unnecessary testing, especially by targeting redundant and low-quality tests. This is an obvious step we need to take and one you won't find much disagreement on.

That doesn't mean we should roll back standards or accountability for schools to provide a good quality education. We need to make sure we establish expectations for our students that put them on a path to competing in the 21st century global economy.

And let me be clear on assessments. We know if we don't have ways to measure students' progress, and if we don't hold our States accountable, the victims will invariably be the kids from poor neighborhoods, children of color, and students with disabilities. These are the students who too often fall through the cracks, and that is not fair. True accountability makes sure we are holding our schools up to our Nation's promise of equality and justice. This is a civil rights issue, plain and simple.

Another reason assessments are important is they help parents monitor their kids' progress. If a school is consistently failing to provide a quality education year after year, parents deserve to know. We shouldn't forget this law provides the Nation's largest Federal investment in K–12 education. It would be irresponsible to ask our taxpayers to spend billions of dollars on education without knowing if it is making a difference in our students' lives. That is a good government principle which Democrats and Republicans should be able to agree on and which the taxpayers should have every right to expect.

So let's maintain strong accountability that measures the students' growth with statewide assessments. I believe annual assessments are one of the most important tools we have to make sure our schools are working for every student. We need to make sure these assessments don't lead to unintended consequences. But I would be very concerned about any proposal that rolls back this key student and taxpayer protection and accountability tool.

I believe we need statewide assessments that give parents, civil rights groups, and policymakers the ability to see how students are doing from district to district.

Furthermore, to make sure we are meeting our obligations to all of our students, let's increase funding for schools that have high numbers of children from low-income backgrounds. Rich or poor, every child should get a high-quality education.

The ones who are on the frontlines of this noble work—let's make sure our teachers and principals have the resources they deserve to continue to build their skills so they can best help the students about whom they care so much. Let's improve schools through innovation and with coursework that challenges our students—not just so they earn a diploma but so their diploma means they are truly college- and career-ready.

I believe Congress should only pass an education bill that expands access to preschool programs. This is a particularly important issue to me. As a mom and when I was a preschool teacher, I saw firsthand the kind of transformation early learning can inspire in a child not just to start kindergarten ready to learn but to succeed later in life. That is why law enforcement, business groups, military leaders, and so many others support expanding access to early childhood education.

Congress needs to catch up with the Democratic and Republican Governors and legislators around the country who support investments in early learning, and we need to make sure the investments in our youngest kids that will pay off for generations to come are part of this bill.

Those are just some of the core principles I am going to be focused on as we work together to revamp our Education bill.

Providing an excellent education to all students is a national priority—not just because our children deserve it but because it is one of the best investments we can make to ensure long-term and broad-based economic growth. Businesses and entrepreneurs need the next generation of workers to come in and help them innovate, invent, build, and grow. That is something I hear from my Washington State businesses all the time.

Making sure all students are able to take on the jobs of the 21st century is the only way our Nation will stay economically competitive in the years to come. Other countries are investing massively in education and their students, and we cannot afford to fall behind in this country.

Let me be clear on another point. The only way Congress will be able to fix this law is by working in a bipartisan way. That means Republicans should come to the table ready to work with Democrats to get this done. I know the Republicans are the majority in the Congress, and I welcome our new committee chair, Senator ALEXANDER. I listened carefully to his remarks and thank him for reaching out to begin this process. But parents across the country are expecting us to put partisanship aside and work together for the good of our children.

Secretary Duncan, President Obama, and so many of us here in Congress have made it very clear that we aren't going to accept a bill that hurts students or doesn't live up to the ideals of our great Nation.

There is no question, as Senator ALEXANDER said, that there are some serious differences in the way the two parties approach this, but I am confident, just as we did with the budget last Congress, we can find common ground and move forward if both sides are willing to leave their partisan corners and work across the aisle. Everyone should be able to agree that this law needs to provide every student in every school in every State with a quality education, and that is what I am going to be fighting for.

When President Johnson signed the Education bill, he said he envisioned ''full educational opportunity as our first national goal.'' Our Nation's commitment to that ideal is so important to me and my family. I would not be here in this Senate Chamber without it. When I was 15 years old, my dad was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. In just a few short years he could no longer work at the five-and-dime store he ran. Without warning, my family fell on hard times. But instead of falling through the cracks, my six brothers and sisters and I got a good education because of our public schools, and we all went to college with the support from the program we now know as Pell grants. My mother was

able to get the skills she needed to get a job through a worker training program at Lake Washington Vocational School.

Today I believe we need to continue to make education a national priority so more families can seize the opportunities that are only possible with access to a good education. So I am glad to be here on the floor today with the chairman of our committee, and I call on Democrats and Republicans to work together to fix this law.

For the child who may not live in the best neighborhood or the kid whose parents are struggling to make ends meet, for every student who deserves the chance to learn, grow, and thrive—I hope we can work together to write a bill to make sure every child in this country gets a quality education. Let's make sure our country continues to have the best workforce the world over. Let's deliver on Jefferson's promise of education as the foundation for freedom and happiness.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. I thank the Senator from Washington for her remarks. In the spirit of her remarks, I am delighted to have the privilege of working with her in Congress because of her leadership position, her background, her caring for children, and her reputation for getting results. I like all of those things.

I neglected to mention that our first hearing will be on the 21st—a week from Wednesday—on testing and accountability. I am working with Senator MURRAY to see if perhaps we can agree on the witnesses. The purpose of the hearing is to ask the questions she asked: Are these the right tests? Are they redundant tests? Are there too many tests? What are we hearing from across the country?

I thank the Senator for her comments. I took careful notes.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, I rise to speak about the law enforcement in Pennsylvania and throughout the country.

We just finished the holiday season, and in my family—as with many of us, I am sure—we had a wonderful Christmas in our homes, had a wonderful meal, and got to watch the kids open their presents.

There are a lot of Pennsylvanians and Americans who didn't have the chance to do what we got to enjoy, and they were the law enforcement men and women who were out on the streets, in the cold, protecting us as they do day in and day out because their work goes on 24/7, 365 days a year.

Just this past Saturday a number of us gathered on Independence Mall in Philadelphia. Several hundred people braved a very cold and windy day to let the law enforcement officials of Pennsylvania and beyond know just how much we appreciate the sacrifice they make for us day in and day out. We had a terrific turnout. It was a very enthusiastic crowd who rallied in support of our police officers.

But being a police officer is not just often inconvenient; sometimes it is very dangerous. Last year 115 police officers died in the line of duty. So far we are 13 days into a new year and 10 officers have already been shot and wounded.

Often these police officers have been targeted and shot just because of the uniform they wear. Unfortunately, Pennsylvania is not immune to this problem. Last year on September 12, late at night, two Pennsylvania State troopers were coming in for their shift at work, and Eric Frein was lying in wait, hiding in the woods, with a high-powered rifle. He shot and killed Corporal Bryon Dickson, and he shot Trooper Alex Douglass, who was grievously wounded. The killer, Eric Frein, didn't know either Corporal Dickson or Trooper Douglass; he shot the two police officers simply because they were police officers. He thought that somehow by killing a cop he would help spark a revolution. Such is the madness police officers have to face on a regular basis. On any given day they don't know that they won't run into that kind of insanity.

It is important for us to remember that these victims—in this case, Corporal Dickson—aren't just numbers and badges. Corporal Dickson was a dad, the father of two young boys. He used to enjoy making toys for his sons. He was a devoted husband who had recently celebrated his 10th wedding anniversary. He was a proud Marine Corps veteran.

I am proud, as Pennsylvanians generally are, of the response of law enforcement to the savage and despicable shooting of these two State troopers. Officers from all across Pennsylvania and surrounding States and even around the country joined in a very intensive, tireless, 7-week-long manhunt. In the end they found Eric Frein, and they brought him into custody wearing the handcuffs of Corporal Dickson. He will meet justice.

But, of course, the story doesn't end there. There was another terrible tragedy just last month in Brooklyn. Just 5 days before Christmas, Officer Rafael Ramos and Officer Wenjian Liu were both murdered in the line of duty. In the middle of the afternoon, in broad daylight, a gunman approached their marked police vehicle while they sat in the vehicle and shot each police officer point-blank range in the head, killing them both instantly. The motivation of the gunman was very clear: He just wanted to kill any police officer he could. That day, the gunman posted messages such as ''They Take 1 of Ours . . . Let's Take 2 of Theirs.'' Another message he posted used the hashtag advocating ''Shoot the Police.''

Officers Ramos and Liu were not just nameless people in uniforms either.

Officer Ramos was described by his family and friends ''as a Puerto Rican kid who grew up on these streets'' in Queens and never stopped trying to help the people in his community. Officer Ramos had spent the last 10 years of his life studying to become a chaplain. He was murdered just an hour before his graduation ceremony. Office Ramos joined the police force at the age of 37. He explained that he saw the streets as his ministry and that by protecting and serving his community, he was serving God as well. Office Ramos left behind his wife and two sons, 19-year-old Jaden and 13-year-old Justin.

Officer Liu was the other victim that day. In many ways, Officer Liu was the epitome of the American dream. He was a young boy who at age 12 came from China to America with his family. He was a teenage boy who left playground basketball games occasionally so he could do the shopping for his family's groceries. He was a young man who was so inspired by the heroism he saw on September 11 that he decided he would become a police officer. He was the police officer who called home every night to let his dad know he had finished a day of work safely—every night, that is, except December 20, when the phone call never came. Officer Liu is survived by his wife, whom he married just 3 months before.

The response of law enforcement to the savage murders of Officer Ramos and Officer Liu should make every American proud. Over 25,000 police officers traveled from across America and from parts of Canada to attend the funeral services last month.

We can never really fully repay the debt of the men and women who sacrifice their very lives protecting us, but there are small things we can do to help the families they leave behind. I want to call on Congress to take one small step toward that goal. We should pass the Children of Fallen Heroes Scholarship Act, and we should do so soon.

The Children of Fallen Heroes Scholarship Act simply provides that any child whose parent dies in the line of duty as a member of the armed services or as a public safety officer would be entitled to the maximum permissible scholarship under the Pell Grant Program for their attendance in college.

Five years ago the House of Representatives unanimously passed this legislation. My fellow Pennsylvanian Senator BOB CASEY plans to reintroduce this legislation. I would be cosponsoring this legislation, and I call on Congress to pick up where it left off back in 2010 and enact the Children of Fallen Heroes Scholarship Act.

I also want to take a moment to address the recent spate of protests we have seen. People have gone out on to the streets and across the country, often harshly criticizing the officers. I want to be clear, if people want to protest, they have the right to protest; and I would never challenge their right to say what is on their minds or to convey whatever message they would like

to convey. But I would hope they would keep a few basic facts in mind as they consider, or in fact carry out, the protests.

No. 1, any human institution is going to be imperfect. That is the nature of humanity. It consists of human beings. So it therefore will be imperfect. But the fact is that the overwhelming majority of police officers are honest, hard working, decent Americans, and they are motivated by the desire to serve and protect the community in which they live, and they don't have a racist bone in their bodies.

So my message to law enforcement is I understand how demoralizing it must have been recently to see some of these protests, to hear some of the outrageous and slanderous statements that have been made. But these protestors don't speak for most Americans. The fact is, a big majority of Pennsylvanians and, I suspect, a big majority of Americans know that every day 780,000 men and women across America who put on their blue uniforms and put on their badges are answering to the call of the people in need when they need them the most, and they put themselves in great danger to serve all of us. When other people choose to run away from danger, they are the ones who have to run toward it.

So just as the law enforcement community has stood by the families of all the victims, and that of Officer Dickson, Officer Ramos, and Officer Liu, I want you to know that America stands with you.

Thank you, Mr. President, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LANKFORD). The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. First, I would like to thank my colleague from Pennsylvania for his thoughtful remarks. As one who has been involved in law enforcement for a number of years and having great friends in the law enforcement community, I am well aware of what their duties are like.

I remember we had a dangerous event here at our Capitol, and one of the police officers raced around the building to the scene of the event. Did he know what could happen to him? Could there be a team of terrorists waiting to assassinate him when he came around that corner?

What if a police officer responds to a domestic violence call at the a home? They don't know what is behind that door and what might happen to them. It is a tough job. They have a right to come home to their family and their children. They do not have to allow themselves to be murdered by someone who is a danger. It is a tough issue. Police departments work at it very hard.

I thank Senator TOOMEY for his beautiful remarks. I think they are very appropriate at this time.

Mr. President, with regard to the Keystone Pipeline issue and the discussion we have been having here, I want to associate myself with a series of very important and balanced concerns raised in support of that pipeline.

We have pipelines that criss-cross my State, as the Presiding Officer does in Oklahoma. We don't have problems with them. I cannot remember when somebody raised a problem, environmentally, about a pipeline. We know they are less likely to cause environmental damage than transportation by train or truck. We know they are less likely to be accessed. We know there is less energy consumed in that process. So I want to associate myself with that.

But there is something that has been bothering me for quite a long time, and I want to raise that point today because I think it is so valid and I think it is important for all of us to understand. The reason this Senator and I think others have advocated for more production of American energy, advocated for these issues and for more production is not to benefit some oil company, as we have been wrongly accused, not to benefit some rich group, it is to benefit the American consumer. The more energy we produce in America, the more the American people benefit.

We import a great deal of oil today. It is less now because we are producing more through the new technology of fracking and other technology. We have seen a reduction in the amount we import. Much of it has been imported from places such as Saudi Arabia, Venezuela, and Libya—many places with which we have not had very good relations. So we have made a transfer of wealth from the American people to foreign nations—weakening us and strengthening them. Many of them have not been friendly to us over the years, as I have said. So we have a choice in this vote to help supply a shortage we have from our—perhaps—closest ally in the world, Canada.

I was at the Canadian-American Interparliamentary Group. I was surprised how deeply our Canadian friends feel about this pipeline. They cannot imagine why we wouldn't want to buy oil from them as opposed to other countries around the world. They purchase all kinds of products from us. We have a good, fair, and honest trading relationship with Canada. They support us throughout the world, consistently in the U.N. and in other places, on important issues—important to the American people. We have so many common interests.

No. 1, I just want to say if we are going to import oil from around the world to meet our needs, there is no better country we could ever choose to import from than Canada, our friend and neighbor.

No. 2, it has been said that this is being done to help some big business. That is not the way this system works. In a free market system, bringing in this oil provides another source of oil for consumers. They don't have to buy the Canadian oil if it is not cheaper. They wouldn't build this pipeline if they didn't think they could sell the oil cheaper than Saudi Arabia and Venezuela could produce it or even America could produce it. They believe they can sell it, and they have to sell it for a lower cost or they won't sell it.

What would the lower cost mean? It means good things for mothers, for children, for families, and for businesses. All over America we have lower cost energy to make America a stronger, more vibrant world-class economy. We are able to compete in the world market if our energy costs are below other nation's energy costs. It helps us overcome the wage differences that Americans have compared to other places around the world. This reliable source of energy is important.

I guess what I wish to say to my colleagues is that this is an opportunity for us to make a statement. The statement is we are going to help the American people by reducing the cost of their energy so they may have more money each month to maybe go out to a movie, to go out to eat—and it can make quite a difference.

Well, they say the price is fixed. You know, these guys have got these powers, and try to manipulate prices. I don't deny that goes on in the world. But one of the most powerful forces in the world is supply and demand. If the oil companies are so powerful, why has oil fallen from $110 a barrel this summer to now $46 a barrel today? Why did this happen? Because there is a supply from fracking, from other sources around the world. It has brought up the supply, created some surplus, and the prices have collapsed. There are a lot of oil companies out there that are hurting today.

So if you don't like big oil and you don't like the big oil companies, why would you want to oppose importing oil that would be cheaper? This is the way the free market system works. I would say the market system is working. I saw an expert yesterday in Barron's indicating that oil could fall to $20 a barrel. That would be great for the American consumer.

I spoke with an oilman. I teased him a little bit. I said: I hope you saved some money, because I like this low-priced oil. Don't come in here and ask me to have oil go up on my constituents, on American consumers.

I mean, I appreciate the fact that people go out there and they drill these multimillion dollar wells and sometimes they are dry and sometimes they hit. That is the great American free market system. Some people have gotten rich. A lot of them have gone broke. There has been boom and bust in the oil industry since the beginning of time, as it is documented by Daniel Yergin in the book ''The Prize'' and by other writers. This is the way it has always been.

We benefit when the price falls, and importing a good source of oil from our neighbor Canada at a competitive price provides one more source that helps keep the price down and gives more options to the American people. It is the

right thing to do, colleagues. I cannot imagine that we would want to favor importation of oil from other countries over Canada.

I believe we should go forward with this, and I am concerned that the President and his allies are not in agreement. But look, this is a true fact, as many of us who have been involved in these issues for several years have come to understand. There is a large group of folks out there—activists, environmental extremists, and not just good environmentalists but people who have extreme views—who want the price of energy to go up. President Obama even said it in the campaign when he ran the first time. He said the price of electricity would necessarily skyrocket. That is not my policy. That is not the policy of a good public servant, in my view, for America, for the American workers. Personally, I want the electric bill as low as we could possibly keep it, consistent with good environmental and clean activities, and I want that gasoline bill as low as we can get it. That is what we should do, and that is how we can make this country better. It will make it tougher for a lot of these guys who have been sitting on oil at $100 a barrel and now it is $46.

So who is the loser with more supply? The guys who have been sitting on the energy. I don't bear any grief for them. I am happy if they make money. They have to go through tough times just as everybody else does.

I want to thank Senator HOEVEN and others who worked so hard on this legislation. I believe we are in a position to see some positive action occur in the next few days and look forward to creating an additional supply of oil from an ally of the United States that will bring down the price of oil perhaps even further in the world and in the U.S. market.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, I wish to take a few moments to speak about an amendment that I will be offering as part of the Keystone Pipeline legislation. It is an extremely simple, straightforward amendment. It is a brief amendment, but it basically raises a very fundamental issue, and that issue is whether the Senate will abide by scientific evidence, will come down on the side of science as we debate this enormously important issue of climate change.

The amendment is very brief, and I wish to read it and then explain why I believe it is such an important amendment. This is what it says:

It is the sense of Congress that Congress is in agreement with the opinion of virtually the entire worldwide scientific community that, No. 1, climate change is real; No. 2, climate change is caused by human activities; No. 3, climate change has already caused devastating problems in the United States and around the world; No. 4, a brief window of opportunity exists before the United States and the entire planet suffer irreparable harm; and No. 5, it is imperative that the United States transform its energy system away from fossil fuels and toward energy efficiency and sustainable energy as rapidly as possible.

That is it. That is the entire amendment. I would say that for the scientific community around the world, there is nothing in that statement that smacks of controversy. These are simple statements of fact, agreed to by the overwhelming majority of scientists who have written and studied climate change.

Climate change is, in fact, one of the great threats facing our country and the entire planet. It has the capability of causing severe harm to our economy, to the food supply, to access to water, and to national security.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change—the leading international scientific body on this issue—reported yet again this past fall that "warming of the climate system is unequivocal, as is now evident from observations of increases in global average air and ocean temperatures, widespread melting of snow and ice and rising global average sea level."

More than 97 percent of the scientific community in the United States and across the globe agrees with these findings, including, among many other organizations, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Chemical Society, the American Meteorological Society, and the American Geophysical Union, to name just a few. In fact, at least 37 American scientific organizations, 118 international scientific organizations and national academies, and 21 medical associations all agree that climate change is real and is being caused by human activities.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a list of 37 American scientific organizations, 135 international scientific organizations, 21 medical associations, and some religious and teacher organizations that understand that climate change is real and that it is caused by human activity.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

Virtually every major scientific organization in this country and throughout the world have said that climate change is real, climate change is caused by carbon emissions and human activity, and that climate change is already causing devastating problems in the United States of America and around the world.

This list includes at least:

37 American scientific organizations, 135 international scientific organizations, 21 medical associations, 4 religious organizations.

37 AMERICAN SCIENTIFIC ORGANIZATIONS

American Anthropological Association, American Association for the Advancement of Science, American Association of Geographers, American Association of State Climatologists, American Astronomical Society, American Chemical Society, American Fisheries Society, American Geophysical Union, American Institute of Biological Sciences, American Institute of Physics, American Meteorological Society, American Physical Society, American Quaternary Association, American Society for Microbiology, American Society of Agronomy, American Society of Plant Biologists, American Statistical Association, Association of American Geographers, Association of Ecosystem Research Centers, Botanical Society of America, California Academy of Sciences.

Crop Science Society of America, Ecological Society of America, National Academy of Engineering, National Academy of Sciences (USA), National Association of State Foresters, New York Academy of Sciences, Scripps Institution of Oceanography, Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics, Society of American Foresters, Society of Systematic Biologists, Soil Science Society of America, The Geological Society of America, The Wildlife Society, United States National Research Council, University Corporation for Atmospheric Research, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution.

135 INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC ASSOCIATIONS

Academia Brasiliera de Ciências (Brazil), Academia Chilena de Ciencias (Chile), Academia das Ciencias de Lisboa (Portugal), Academia de Ciencias de la República Dominicana, Academia de Ciencias Físicas, Matemáticas y Naturales de Venezuela, Academia de Ciencias Medicas, Físicas y Naturales de Guatemala. Academia Mexicana de Ciencias, Academia Nacional de Ciencias de Bolivia, Academia Nacional de Ciencias del Peru, Academia Sinica, Taiwan, China, Academiê des Sciences et Techniques du Sénégal, Acadêmie des Sciences (France), Academy of Athens, Academy of Science for South Africa, Academy of Science of Mozambique, Academy of Sciences Malaysia, Academy of Sciences of Moldova, Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, Academy of Sciences of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Academy of Scientific Research and Technology, Egypt, Accademia dei Lincei (Italy), Africa Centre for Climate and Earth Systems Science.

African Academy of Sciences, Albanian Academy of Sciences, Amazon Environmental Research Institute, Australian Academy of Science (Australia), Australian Coral Reef Society, Australian Institute of Marine Science, Australian Institute of Physics, Australian Marine Sciences Association, Australian Meteorological and Oceanographic Society, Bangladesh Academy of Sciences, Botanical Society of America, British Antarctic Survey, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Cameroon Academy of Sciences, Canadian Association of Physicists, Canadian Foundation for Climate and Atmospheric Sciences, Canadian Geophysical Union, Canadian Meteorological and Oceanographic Society, Canadian Society of Soil Science, Canadian Society of Zoologists, Caribbean Academy of Sciences, Center for International Forestry Research, Chinese Academy of the Sciences, Colombian Academy of Exact, Physical and Natural Sciences, Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (Australia).

Croatian Academy of Arts and Sciences, Cuban Academy of Sciences, Delegation of the Finnish Academies of Science and Letters, Deutsche Akademie der Naturforscher Leopoldina (Germany), Ecological Society of Australia, European Academy of Sciences and Arts, European Federation of Geologists, European Geosciences Union, European Physical Society, European Science Foundation, Federation of Australian Scientific and

Technological Societies, Geological Society of Australia, Geological Society of London, Georgian Academy of Sciences, Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences, Indian National Science Academy, Indonesian Academy of the Sciences, Institute of Biology (UK), Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Institute of Marine Engineering, Science and Technology, Institution of Mechanical Engineers, UK.

InterAcademy Council, International Alliance of Research Universities, International Arctic Science Committee, International Association for Great Lakes Research, International Council for Science, International Council of Academies of Engineering and Technological Sciences, International Research Institute for Climate and Society, International Union for Quaternary Research, International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics, International Union of Pure and Applied Physics, Islamic World Academy of Sciences, Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, Kenya National Academy of Sciences, Korean Academy of Science and Technology, Kosovo Academy of Sciences and Arts, Latin American Academy of Sciences, Latvian Academy of Sciences, Lithuanian Academy of Sciences, Madagascar National Academy of Arts, Letters, and Sciences, Mauritius Academy of Science and Technology, Montenegrin Academy of Sciences and Arts.

National Academy of Exact, Physical and Natural Sciences, Argentina, National Academy of Sciences of Armenia, National Academy of Sciences of the Kyrgyz Republic, National Academy of Sciences, Sri Lanka, National Council of Engineers, Australia, National Institute of Water & Atmospheric Research, New Zealand, Natural Environment Research Council, UK, Nicaraguan Academy of Sciences, Nigerian Academy of Science, Norwegian Academy of Sciences and Letters, Organization of Biological Field Stations, Pakistan Academy of Sciences, Palestine Academy for Science and Technology, Polish Academy of the Sciences, Romanian Academy, Royal Academies for Science and the Arts of Belgium (Belgium), Royal Academy of Exact, Physical and Natural Sciences of Spain, Royal Astronomical Society, UK, Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters, Royal Irish Academy, Royal Meteorological Society, Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, Royal Netherlands Institute for Sea Research, Royal Scientific Society of Jordan, Royal Society of Canada.

Royal Society of Chemistry, UK, Royal Society of New Zealand, Royal Society, UK, Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, Russian Academy of Sciences, Science Council of Japan, Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Slovak Academy of Sciences, Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Society of Biology, UK, Society of Systematic Biologists, Sudanese National Academy of Science, Tanzania Academy of Sciences, The Geological Society (UK), The World Academy of Sciences (TWAS) for the developing world, Turkish Academy of Sciences, Uganda National Academy of Sciences, Union der Deutschen Akademien der Wissenschaften, World Meteorological Association, Zambia Academy of Sciences, Zimbabwe Academy of Sciences, Sudan National Academy of Sciences.

21 MEDICAL ASSOCIATIONS

American Academy of Pediatrics, American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, American College of Preventive Medicine, American Lung Association, American Medical Association, American Nurses Association, American Public Health Association, American Thoracic Society, Association of State and Territorial Health Officials, Australian Medical Association, Children's Environmental Health Network, Health Care without Harm, Hepatitis Foundation International, National Association of County and City Health Officials, National Association of Local Boards of Health, National Environmental Health Association, Partnership for Prevention, Physicians for Social Responsibility, Trust for America's Health, World Federation of Public Health Associations, World Health Organization.

4 RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

Interfaith Power and Light, National Association of Evangelicals, Presbyterian Mission Agency, The Pope.

OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

American Association for Wildlife Veterinarians, American Society of Civil Engineers, International Association for Great Lakes Research, Institute of Professional Engineers New Zealand, Natural Science Collections Alliance, Organization of Biological Field Stations, The Institution of Engineers Australia, The World Federation of Engineering Organizations, World Forestry Congress.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, let me read from an excerpt of a letter signed by virtually every major scientific organization in this country that was sent to the U.S. Senate way back in 2009. This is what the letter states:

> Observations throughout the world make it clear that climate change is occurring, and rigorous scientific research demonstrates that the greenhouse gases emitted by human activities are the primary driver. These conclusions are based on multiple independent lines of evidence, and contrary assertions are inconsistent with an objective assessment of the vast body of peer-reviewed science. Moreover, there is strong evidence that ongoing climate change will have broad impact on society, including the global economy and on the environment. For the United States, climate change impacts include sea level rise for coastal states, greater threats of extreme weather events, and increased risk of regional water scarcity, urban heat waves, western wildfires, and a disturbance of biological systems throughout the country. The severity of climate change impacts is expected to increase substantially in the coming decades.

Let me repeat that one sentence:

> The severity of climate change impacts is expected to increase substantially in the coming decades.

We know that the Earth's climate is warming and warming quickly as a result of industrial greenhouse gas emissions. The 2014 National Climate Assessment reported:

> The most recent decade was the nation's warmest on record. U.S. temperatures are expected to continue to rise.

According to NOAA, October, August, June, and May were the hottest months ever recorded. And 2012 was the warmest year on record in the contiguous United States and saw at least 69,000 local heat records set.

The consequence of this rapid and dramatic rise in global temperatures—what does that mean? What is going to happen? The answer is, it is going to mean more severe storms, more flooding and destructive storm surges, heat waves, drought, forest fires, and the inundation of water supplies and agricultural land with saltwater.

As the New York Times reported in August, droughts in the West and Southwestern United States appear to be intensifying as a result of climate change.

> Over the past decade, droughts in some regions have rivaled the epic dry spells of the 1930s and 1950s. . . . The country is in the midst of one of the most sustained periods of increasing drought on record.

China's heat wave a year and a half ago was the worst in at least 140 years. Fire-suppression costs in the United States have increased from roughly $1 billion annually in the mid-1990s to an average of more than $3 billion in the last 5 years, adjusted for inflation, reports the National Climate Assessment.

Our oceans are not just warming, they are becoming more acidic, threatening fish, coral reefs, and other sea life.

A study published in the Journal of Science reported:

> Carbon dioxide emissions in the atmosphere are driving a rate of change in ocean acidity, which is already thought to be faster than at any time in the past 50 million years.

The authors warn that we may be entering an unknown territory of marine ecosystem change.

Extreme storms are also becoming more common and more intense, with extraordinary impacts. For example, when Typhoon Haiyan struck the Philippines a year ago, it displaced over 4 million people, killed thousands, and cost the country at least $15 billion in damages.

What will happen if we fail to cut back dramatically on greenhouse gas emissions and climate change continues to accelerate? What will that reality mean for our country and for the globe? The IPCC estimates that without additional efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, ''warming is more likely than not'' to exceed 4 degrees Celsius—7.2 degrees Fahrenheit—by the end of the century.

Let me repeat that. If we do not begin the process to dramatically reverse carbon emissions and slow down the warming of this planet by the end of the century, warming is more likely than not to exceed 4 degrees Celsius, which is 7.2 degrees Fahrenheit, resulting in a planet that is over 7 degrees Fahrenheit warmer.

Similarly, just last year the White House released the National Climate Assessment, emphasizing that global warming is already happening and warning that global warming could exceed 10 degrees in the United States by the end of the century—10 degrees Fahrenheit.

The World Bank, which is a pretty conservative organization, talked about a world in which temperatures increase by just 4 degrees Celsius, that that would be one of unprecedented heat waves, severe drought, and major floods in many regions, with serious impacts on many systems, ecosystems, and associated services. This is the warning we hear from the World Bank, which is a fairly conservative international organization.

The IPCC reports that sea levels are likely to rise another 10 to 32 inches by the end of the century. Some studies have reported projected increases of more than 6 feet during that time period.

As the New York Times reported, a rise of less than 4 feet would inundate land on which some 3.7 million Americans live. Miami, New Orleans, New York, and Boston are highly vulnerable.

Similarly, according to the IPCC, ''many small island nations are only a few meters above present sea level. These states may face serious threat of permanent inundation from sea-level rise.''

Reuters has reported that experts estimate that if the sea level rises by 1 meter over the next 50 years, 20 million additional people will be displaced from their land.

The Army Corps of Engineers has predicted that the entire village of Newtok, AK, could be underwater by 2017 and more than 180 additional Native Alaskan villages are at risk. Parts of Alaska are literally vanishing.

As reported in the journal Forest Ecology and Management, U.S. Forest Service researchers reported that wildfires are expected to increase 50 percent across the United States under a changing climate and over 100 percent in areas of the West by 2050. So huge increases in forest fires are expected.

The World Health Organization reported in August that the number of weather-related natural disasters has more than tripled since the 1960s, and more than 60,000 people now die each year in weather-related natural disasters. By 2020 food production is estimated to drop by 50 percent in some African countries, and by 2090, the World Health Organization anticipates, climate change will double the frequency of drought and the duration will be six times longer.

In 2003 a heat wave in Europe killed an estimated 70,000 people. As a study published in Nature Climate Change projects, however, Europe will likely experience severe heat waves once every 5 years now, which is 10 times more frequent than just a decade ago.

The need to act quickly is profound and pronounced. In its fifth assessment, the IPCC found that ''without additional mitigation efforts beyond those in place today, and even with adaptation, warming by the end of the 21st century will lead to high to very high risk of severe, widespread, and irreversible impacts globally.''

In order to prevent ''irreversible and severe impacts,'' we must quickly reduce greenhouse gas emissions in order to keep warming below 2 degrees Celsius, and to do that we must transform our energy system away from fossil fuel and into energy efficiency and sustainable energy.

In the face of this overwhelming evidence, in the face of deep concerns all over this planet, what is the Senate going to do over the next few weeks? Well, I hope very much that we do not go forward with the Keystone Pipeline, which moves us exactly in the wrong direction by expanding the production and transportation of some of the dirtiest fossil fuel on this Earth. I think that would be a terrible mistake. But maybe more importantly, I hope the Senate goes on record in strongly supporting the overwhelming scientific evidence which tells us loudly and clearly that climate change is real, that climate change is caused by human activity and the emission of carbon, and that climate change is already causing devastating problems in our country and around the world.

We have a short window of opportunity in order to move dramatically to reverse climate change and cut carbon, and we must transform our energy system away from fossil fuel to energy efficiency and sustainable energy.

I intend to offer an amendment which basically urges the entire U.S. Senate to go on record in making it clear that they understand what scientists are talking about. They are going to listen to the scientific community, and they are going to take actions for which our kids and our grandchildren will be proud of them so that we do not leave them with a nation and a planet substantially less habitable than the planet on which we were born.

With that, I want to thank Senator BENNET and Senator CARPER for cosponsoring this amendment. I hope we can have more cosponsors and I look forward to seeing the adoption of this important amendment.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

PERSONAL IDENTITY THEFT

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I want to speak on the Keystone Pipeline, but before I do, I want to alert the Senate that I am filing legislation today to try to protect the average American from the breach of data in an individual company and therefore the loss of their personal identification.

We have had a number of cases where there have been these wide data breaches in companies with hundreds of thousands of records being stolen. And, of course, woe to you if, in fact, your personal identity is stolen. It may manifest itself in so many different ways, not the least of which we have seen particularly in the Tampa and the Miami area of my State—the use of stolen Social Security numbers to file false income tax returns seeking refunds. Believe it or not, there was a ring in Tampa that was actually doing this so successfully that the street crime actually dropped—the burglaries, the robberies, the breakings and enterings, all of that dropped because suddenly the criminals found it was so easy to use a laptop instead, once they had secured the stolen ID, to generate these false income tax returns. That is just one example.

The fact is if your identity is stolen because of a breach in a corporation, you should have a right of having the knowledge that your security has been breached. Therefore, we are filing today, with a number of cosponsors, simple legislation that I have filed before in previous Congresses, that if data is stolen from a company, it is incumbent upon that company to notify its customers within 30 days that their secure information has been stolen. That is it. Plain and simple.

Mr. President, I want to talk about the Keystone XL. I would first remind anybody who is not familiar with this issue, this is the Keystone XL Pipeline. What does XL stand for? It stands for extra large. Well, if this is an extra-large pipeline, that would indicate there is a smaller pipeline, and in fact there is. There is a smaller pipeline that is in existence from Canada coming across the northern part of the United States, coming down to a terminal in southern Missouri.

It was about 2 years ago that the President announced he was going to start and allow the extension of that southern terminus all the way to the gulf where there are the refineries. That is under construction. I don't know the completion date. It may be already completed. So there is a pipeline from Canada all the way to the gulf coast.

If what the oil interests in Canada want is a larger pipeline, XL, a lot of this environmental debate could have been avoided if you simply ran it along the same route as the existing pipeline. In fact, there wouldn't have been all the controversy about all of the aquifer and the recharge area right across the middle of Nebraska that the State of Nebraska got so exercised about, and at first the Governor and the various State officials took the position they did not want this.

Finally, a new route was negotiated and the route was further to the east, not right across the middle of the recharge area which supplies a lot of the aquifer not only in Nebraska but a lot of the Western States. Yet it is still running across part of the aquifer. We would have avoided all of that had you just run the XL pipeline right along the existing pipeline. There wouldn't have been all of this siting problem. The environmental problems associated with the pipeline wouldn't have been there.

But why was it done? This is all politics. It was done in the middle of the Presidential campaign going back—coming up to the 2012 campaign, and it was supposedly to show that the President was anti-energy, anti-energy independence because he wasn't in favor of creating more oil production in North America.

Well, that is clearly what played out. But along the way, then the question came: Well, assuming you put this pipeline there, what is going to happen to that Canadian oil? Where is it going to go? It was a legitimate question.

The answer to that was it was going to go right out to additional foreign

countries. So this particular Senator said, now wait a minute, do I understand that you want Canadian oil to have a conduit right through the center of the United States to a port in the Gulf of Mexico, then to be exported to foreign countries? And the answer to that was yes.

I said, well, since it seems as though it would be in the interests of the United States that we at least keep part of that in the United States for consumption so it would lessen our dependence on foreign oil coming from the Middle East or coming from places where we used to get some 12 percent to 20 percent of our oil—thank goodness we don't today, but used to from a place such as Nigeria. You know how troubled that area is now.

My question was: Well, wouldn't it make sense that we keep some of that oil in the United States for domestic uses so we didn't have to rely on oil coming from Saudi Arabia, the Persian Gulf area, from the West Coast of Africa? The answer was that they would not entertain an amendment that would prohibit that oil from being exported. Likewise, if the oil is refined on the gulf coast, it is not prohibited from being exported.

I am just a country boy from Florida, but I can put two and two together. It simply does not make sense to me that you would want foreign oil to come in a conduit through the United States right through the heartland to go right out to other oil-thirsty nations in the world. If that were the case, then why doesn't Canada take an oil pipeline and build it themselves to the west, through the Pacific Coast? Or why wouldn't Canada use the existing structures and end up in the Great Lakes and send the oil out through the Great Lakes?

And yet, what did I say? This is politics.

Since the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed last night was passed, this is going to be in front of the Senate. There are going to be opportunities for amendments, and I can tell you that this Senator is going to support the amendment that prohibits this oil from being sent out to other countries.

If we are really interested in the security of the United States, national security, our independence from foreign oil, since Canada is such a close friend and ally, this would be in the interests of the United States.

The fact is that it is coming at an interesting time. It is getting all the more complicated. It used to be that oil—and you think back a half a year, three-quarters of a year ago, oil was selling in excess of $100 barrel. Yesterday it was just over $46 a barrel. It is said that Canada cannot efficiently produce this oil and have any break-even point unless oil is selling in the range of $70 a barrel. So why in the world would Canada even want to do this right now, particularly at a time that oil is at $46 and may stay down for some period of time, even a year or two?

I think if we apply some country-boy logic to this, there are sufficient significant questions—first of all, to kill the bill, and if that is not possible, certainly to amend it so that it complies with the financial and national security interests of the United States. That is the intention of this Senator.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that all postcloture time on the motion to proceed to S. 1 now be expired and the Senate proceed to a vote on the motion to proceed; that if the motion to proceed is adopted, the bill be reported and that Senator MURKOWSKI be recognized to offer a substitute amendment, the text of which is at the desk.

I further ask that the following amendments be in order to be offered during this week's session by Senators CANTWELL and MURKOWSKI or their designees: Markey amendment No. 13 related to oil exports; Portman amendment No. 3; a Franken amendment related to U.S. steel; and that the consideration of these amendments be in the order listed and the bill be for debate only during this week's consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, reserving the right to object. I just want to note for my colleagues that this agreement has been worked out on both sides; that instead of staying until midnight and having a great deal of uncertainty as we approach the next 2 days for both of our caucuses to have retreats, giving people predictability about Friday and next Monday being a holiday, working out a back-and-forth on these agreements I think is a good way to proceed.

I hope people will feel free on Friday to come and dialogue about these or other amendments. But this process is one I think we should pursue at this point, so I will not object.

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

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I have discussed the process going forward on this bill with our leader, the majority leader, and Senator CANTWELL. It is our intention to work together so the two bill managers or their designees continue to offer amendments in an alternating fashion.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time is expired.

The question is on agreeing to the motion to proceed.

The motion was agreed to.

KEYSTONE XL PIPELINE ACT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1) to approve the Keystone XL Pipeline.

AMENDMENT NO. 2

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, at this time I call up my amendment No. 2.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Alaska [Ms. MURKOWSKI], for herself, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. RISCH, Mr. LEE, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. DAINES, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. GARDNER, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. ALEXANDER, and Mrs. CAPITO, proposes an amendment numbered 2.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. I ask unanimous consent that reading of the amendment be suspended.

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: In the nature of a substitute)

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Keystone XL Pipeline Approval Act''.

SEC. 2. KEYSTONE XL APPROVAL.

(a) IN GENERAL.—TransCanada Keystone Pipeline, L.P. may construct, connect, operate, and maintain the pipeline and cross-border facilities described in the application filed on May 4, 2012, by TransCanada Corporation to the Department of State (including any subsequent revision to the pipeline route within the State of Nebraska required or authorized by the State of Nebraska).

(b) ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT.—The Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement issued by the Secretary of State in January 2014, regarding the pipeline referred to in subsection (a), and the environmental analysis, consultation, and review described in that document (including appendices) shall be considered to fully satisfy—

(1) all requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.); and

(2) any other provision of law that requires Federal agency consultation or review (including the consultation or review required under section 7(a) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1536(a))) with respect to the pipeline and facilities referred to in subsection (a).

(c) PERMITS.—Any Federal permit or authorization issued before the date of enactment of this Act for the pipeline and cross-border facilities referred to in subsection (a) shall remain in effect.

(d) JUDICIAL REVIEW.—Except for review in the Supreme Court of the United States, the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit shall have original and exclusive jurisdiction over any civil action for the review of an order or action of a Federal agency regarding the pipeline and cross-border facilities described in subsection (a), and the related facilities in the United States, that are approved by this Act (including any order granting a permit or right-of-way, or any other agency action taken to construct or complete the project pursuant to Federal law).

(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 subsection (a).

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President. I am pleased we are at this point in time