of fact, as to the homes in the northern portion of the Outer Banks where the wild horses are found, where there isn't a road, 60 percent of the homes are owned by Virginians, not North Carolinians. These horses have existed there for hundreds of years. As a matter of fact, these horses have been such an important part of North Carolina's history that in 2010 it was made North Carolina's State horse.

People have seen these horses on the beach and between cottages. They have co-existed with the habitat for over 200 years. The turtles, ducks, and wildlife have thrived. The species of that habitat have survived because there is no better protector of the species than these animals. They eat what they need without removing the roots, which is what helps them to repopulate and stay alive.

Here is the problem: This herd has been mandated to be held at 60 horses, and every scientific study on genetics shows you have to have more than 100 or 120 to have genetic sustainability.

What are we proposing? This act proposes that we bring 20 horses from the Shackleford reserve and integrate them with the horses on the Outer Banks, which is a mere 2 hours away. This herd is similar from the standpoint of its creation. By doing this, we will begin to inject genetics into this so we don't have the genetic deformities that are beginning to be experienced with the Corolla horses. If we don't act now, we could lose these horses, and it is all due to genetic inbreeding.

The reason I am embarrassed to be here is that this is something that ought to be done by unanimous consent. Every person in this body should embrace this legislation. Yet the Fish and Wildlife Service is opposed to this. And there is nothing that says that Fish and Wildlife can't build a fence around the wildlife reserve. It existed for hundreds of years in the wildlife reserve before and after it was designated as a wildlife reserve. As a matter of fact, 70 percent of the land on which these horses roam is private. The land for the wildlife refuge is only 30 percent, but 70 percent of the land is privately owned, and the private landowners are all for making this herd genetically sustainable.

If we don't do this legislatively, let me assure you that the Fish and Wildlife Service is going to hold the number at 60. If they hold the herd at 60, the herd will genetically burn out. I don't know what Fish and Wildlife is going to do. The herd is at 80 today. The herd needs new genetics entered into it to change the trend, but Fish and Wildlife could go out tomorrow and shoot 20 horses. I am sure they would probably tell us that they would take 20 horses and put them somewhere else. Where are they going to put them? Inject them into another genetic herd and increase their sustainability? Maybe so. But if you do it somewhere else, why wouldn't you do the same thing here?

No landowners are clamoring to let this herd die out. As a matter of fact, there are a million and a half people in this country who have expressed support for the sustainability of this herd. But this is where science dictates. Science says that it is not sustainable if you leave this herd without a genetic injection from somewhere else.

This is not a new proposal. It passed in the House twice. It is not a new proposal. Fish and Wildlife has done this in other places. For some reason, they don't want to do it in North Carolina.

The last test for any Member of Congress and anybody in this country should be: What will it cost us to do this? What am I asking you to pay to do this? The answer is zero. There is no Federal cost to this legislation. We can sustain the herd for the future, and it will not cost taxpayers anything. We have a private entity that will take responsibility for the management of the fund.

We don't in any way, shape, or form limit Fish and Wildlife from the standpoint of their ability to fence off whatever they believe is environmentally sensitive. And we have horses that have lived with ducks, geese, and sea turtles for over 200 years and have never seen a problem with it.

The Presiding Officer has been patient. I say to my colleagues: Don't make a mistake. Support this legislation. It is the right thing to do. It doesn't cost the taxpayers money, and it embraces everything that I think America stands for, and that is the preservation of the history of this country. Believe it or not, these horses represent over 200 years of history in North Carolina, and that is why we made it our State horse.

I thank the Presiding Officer, and I yield back my time.

RECESS

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

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:54 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. PORTMAN).

ENERGY POLICY MODERNIZATION ACT OF 2015

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 2012, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2012) to provide for the modernization of the energy policy of the United States, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Murkowski amendment No. 2953, in the nature of a substitute.

Murkowski (for Cassidy/Markey) amendment No. 2954 (to amendment No. 2953), to provide for certain increases in, and limitations on, the drawdown and sales of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve.

Murkowski amendment No. 2963 (to amendment No. 2953), to modify a provision relating to bulk-power system reliability impact statements.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

AMENDMENTS NOS. 3276; 3302, AS MODIFIED; 3055; 3050; 3237; 3308; 3286, AS MODIFIED; 3075; 3168; 3292, AS MODIFIED; 3155; 3270; 3313, AS MODIFIED; 3214; 3266; 3310; 3317; 3265, AS MODIFIED; 3012; 3290; 3004; 3233, AS MODIFIED; 3239; 3221; 3203; 3309, AS MODIFIED; 3229; 3251; AND 2963 TO AMENDMENT NO. 2953

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I call up the following amendments en bloc and ask that they be reported by number and be considered en bloc, along with amendment No. 2963, offered by Senator MURKOWSKI: Cantwell amendment No. 3276; Klobuchar amendment No. 3302, as modified; Flake amendment No. 3055; Flake amendment No. 3050; Hatch amendment No. 3237; Murkowski amendment No. 3308; Heller amendment No. 3286, as modified; Vitter amendment No. 3075; Portman amendment No. 3168; Shaheen amendment No. 3292, as modified; Heinrich amendment No. 3155; Manchin amendment No. 3270; Cantwell amendment No. 3313, as modified; Cantwell amendment No. 3214; Vitter amendment No. 3266; Sullivan amendment No. 3310; Heinrich amendment No. 3317; Vitter amendment No. 3265, as modified; Kaine amendment No. 3012; Alexander amendment No. 3290; Gillibrand amendment No. 3004; Warner amendment No. 3233, as modified; Thune amendment No. 3239; Udall amendment No. 3221; Coons amendment No. 3203; Portman amendment No. 3309, as modified; Flake amendment No. 3229; and Inhofe amendment No. 3251.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the amendments by number.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Alaska [Ms. MURKOWSKI], for herself and others, proposes amendments numbered 3276; 3302, as modified; 3055; 3050; 3237; 3308; 3286, as modified; 3075; 3168; 3292, as modified; 3155; 3270; 3313, as modified; 3214; 3266; 3310; 3317; 3265, as modified; 3012; 3290; 3004; 3233, as modified; 3239; 3221; 3203; 3309, as modified; 3229; and 3251 en bloc to amendment No. 2953.

The amendments are as follows:

AMENDMENT NO. 3276

(Purpose: To strike certain provisions relating to technology demonstration on the distribution system, large-scale geothermal energy, and bio-power initiatives)

Strike section 2303.
Strike section 3009.
Strike section 3017.

AMENDMENT NO. 3302, AS MODIFIED

(Purpose: To modify provisions relating to the energy efficiency materials pilot program)

Beginning on page 37, strike line 16 and all that follows through page 41, line 14 and insert the following:

SEC. 1004. ENERGY EFFICIENCY MATERIALS PILOT PROGRAM.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) APPLICANT.—The term ''applicant'' means a nonprofit organization that applies for a grant under this section.