

The journal found that children exercising outdoors are more likely to contract asthma if they live in areas polluted with high ozone concentrations. This dangerous ozone is created by pollution from old power plants.

Just last week, the General Accounting Office issued this report saying that older power plants are responsible for up to 50 percent of the harmful air emissions released into the air today—50 percent from old power plants.

According to the Energy Information Administration, there has been no change in the average coal-fired power plant efficiency in the last 40 years. Older powerplants emit about twice the amount of harmful pollutants for every increment of electricity generated than newer powerplants.

But even some of these issues pale in comparison to the impact that the release of carbon dioxide from powerplants will have if we do not act soon. Carbon dioxide emissions have been proven to contribute to climate change, and this climate change will have a number of dramatic impacts on our Nation.

Let me list a few. Heat-related deaths will increase 100 percent in cities such as New York, Philadelphia, Cleveland, Los Angeles, and others. In most of New England, the hardwood forest will vanish. In Delaware, a predicted 20-inch rise in sea level will flood 50 percent of Delaware Bay wetlands. Brook trout nationwide may lose 50 percent of their habitat. Drought will be pervasive.

Coastal States, such as Alaska, will see a massive impact, including flooding of coastal villages, storm surges, and extensive infrastructure damage from temperature change, like the melting of the permafrost in northern regions.

Even the administration's recent Climate Action Report recognizes the grave impacts that climate change will have on our health, economy, and the environment.

What are we doing about this air pollution and global warming crisis?

What action is this administration taking to reduce harmful emissions from old polluting powerplants?

What is the Environmental Protection Agency doing to save lives and reduce the health impacts from powerplant—related air pollution?

Let me tell you. Brace yourself. The answer is nothing. This administration is doing absolutely nothing to reduce pollution from old polluting powerplants like this one in the picture.

Why are they doing nothing? I ask that question often, but there does not seem to be an adequate answer.

They are doing something. Let me tell you what they are doing.

The administration just last week announced what could be the biggest roll back in the Clean Air Act in its history. The White House announced a proposal to allow these old polluting powerplants to live on forever, almost unregulated. Remember, these old pow-

erplants are responsible for 50 percent of harmful air pollution.

The White House, along with EPA, has decided to exempt most of these old powerplants from further regulation.

These are the same powerplants causing asthma in our Nation's children. These are the same powerplants causing neurological problems in newborns. These are the same plants killing our forests and lakes. These are the same powerplants adding billions of tons of carbon dioxide to the atmosphere. And they just got a ticket to pollute indefinitely.

What else is the administration doing? They have a policy paper, called Clear Skies, that outlines a proposal to reduce three of the four most harmful pollutants from old powerplants. I commend the President for directing the EPA to develop this policy paper. But what have they done to follow up on the announcement of the Clear Skies Initiative? Nothing.

They have not developed legislation. They have not produced supporting analysis on why their proposal works. They have not begun to negotiate with Members of the Senate or the House. They have been all but silent on the issue.

Why? Why are they letting this massive public health crisis continue? It is a great mystery.

Congress, led by the Senate, isn't going to wait any longer. This week, the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee will pass the Clean Power Act.

The Jeffords-Collins-Lieberman-Snowe Clean Power Act sets real pollution targets. This bill will quickly reduce the harmful air emissions that result in sickness and death. We want to give these old polluting powerplants the tools and guidance to clean up and meet modern standards.

I hope this administration can embrace the Clean Power Act. I am skeptical though, that they will. Why? they argue that it will cost too much.

But let's look at the analysis. According to the Department of Energy, a four pollutant bill could lower Americans' electric bills by \$30 billion a year. That's \$30 billion each year. The DOE report outlines that the longer we wait to enact real powerplant pollution reductions, the more expensive it will be.

The other reason this administration refuses to embrace real air pollution reductions is carbon. They are scared of regulating carbon.

Even though the President committed to controlling carbon emissions from old powerplant, today this administration can't even discuss the issues. Even though the President finally acknowledged in his own report this month that global warming is a real problem. Even though the entire international community is working to implement the Kyoto Treaty to reduce carbon emissions.

What is this administration doing about carbon? Nothing. This doing

nothing seems to be a pattern. I would like to ask the administration, how do we get from nothing to something?

I will make it my full-time job to convince the White House that protecting public health is equally as important as public security. The facts are overwhelming, Homeland Security starts at home. It is about saving lives. The greatest threat are the polluters and we can stop them. That is where we will get the best return on homeland security. And I support it.

We can save thousands of lives, and prevent lots of disease and environmental degradation if we act now to reduce powerplant pollution.

I hope and pray the administration will see the light, if they can, through the smog.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. STABENOW). Under the previous order, the second 30 minutes shall be under the control of the Republican leader or his designee.

The Senator from Alaska.

NUCLEAR POWER

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, I have listened carefully to the Senator from Vermont, and I think how ironic it is that we are at this time contemplating the disposition of the nuclear industry in this State, a nuclear industry that does not emit pollution associated with air quality, an industry that supplies us with 20 to 21 percent of the total power generated in this country. We have an obligation to address what to do with the nuclear waste. The House has done its job. The Senate is postured to act.

The proposal will come up when we return from the July 4 recess. It is anticipated that on July 9 there will be a motion to proceed followed by 10 hours of debate. I urge my colleagues to recognize our responsibility. As the Senator from Vermont suggests, the problems associated with hydrocarbon pollution, of burning oil, gas, and coal, we do not have with nuclear.

We have an obligation, though, as to what to do with the waste. As a consequence, a number of sites were selected for consideration on the east coast and the west coast. The reality that nobody wants the waste is evident, but factually it has to go somewhere. The Japanese and the French are proceeding with reprocessing. Unfortunately, we have chosen not to do that. I personally think that was a mistake. We should reprocess, and I think eventually, regardless of the disposition of Yucca Mountain, that Yucca Mountain should be a retrievable depository. At some point in time, we will take the waste and reprocess it and substantially eliminate some of the concerns, whether proliferation or the long-term concerns, over any water that may go in the site.

YUCCA MOUNTAIN

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, I am going to talk a little this morning