

expenses. If we have a health insurance system that doesn't cover 50 percent or, in some cases, more than 50 percent of the actual costs most people consume in health care expenditures, what kind of health care system is it, as far as insurance is concerned? It is not a very good one.

Again, some Republicans are saying, well, we should be doing what the market is doing. Well, what the market did was cover drug costs. For us not to do that—I think it is a little disingenuous to make the argument that we should not take on this liability. I agree we need to have reforms and control costs, but we need to take on this responsibility because it is part and parcel of good quality health care in America today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. All time has expired.

Mr. SANTORUM. I thank the Chair.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, first, I very much appreciate our colleagues talking on two very important issues this morning in morning business. In a very productive way, it highlights the issues that we will continue to debate and discuss over the next several days.

As I mentioned earlier this morning, the plans are to address the issues of the Energy bill, as well as the Medicare bill, as well as the appropriations bills, over the next several days and bring them to the floor as soon as possible, as soon as they are ready, so we can proceed with this debate in an orderly fashion.

As I mentioned earlier this morning, the plans will be to work through this week and through the weekend and, hopefully, that will be it. Possibly, we might go into the early part of next week.

ENERGY POLICY ACT OF 2003— CONFERENCE REPORT

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, at this point, I move to proceed to the conference report to accompany H.R. 6, the Energy Policy Act.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 6), to enhance energy conservation and research and development, to provide for security and diversity in the energy supply for the American people, and for other purposes, having met, have agreed that the House recede from its disagreement to the amendment of the Senate, and agree to the same, with an amendment, signed by a majority of the conferees on the part of both Houses.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

(The text of the conference report is printed in the proceedings of the House in the RECORD of November 17, 2003.)

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, 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. DOMENICI. 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. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I want to first say to the Senate, a little over a year ago the Senate changed committees and I had the luxury of moving from the Budget Committee to the Energy Committee—perhaps not a luxury in everyone's sense but from my standpoint it was, indeed, a great opportunity and a tremendous change for me. I took that opportunity with a great deal of relish and enthusiasm and decided I would do the very best I could to produce an energy policy, broad based, for this country.

The House agreed on that conference report yesterday by an overwhelming vote. That means that one body has looked at that conference report and, with bipartisan support, said this is a good policy for the United States to follow in the future, and it will do good things for our people and for our growth and development.

The United States of America spends annually \$440 billion, roughly—and that is on the low side—on energy. That energy is the underpinning of our economy and is a principal component of our quality of life. For most Americans, the complex system of energy production and distribution is something they take for granted. When they turn on the lights every morning, they give absolutely no thought to the turbines powered by coal, gas, oil, hydro-power, or nuclear power spinning around to produce that electricity. Only during hurricanes or blackouts are they reminded of how complex the system of transmission lines is that brings that power to their homes and to their businesses sometimes across many States.

Americans almost never give a thought to the fact that beyond the complex physical system that produces and generates our energy is a massively complex system of rules and regulations. These rules and regulations govern, one, who pays for power and who pays for the powerplants and transmission lines; two, how the emission from the plants is regulated; three, who can own them; four, how the fuels can be shipped; and five, what costs can be charged and to whom.

Some of my colleagues are critical of this legislation. Who would not expect that to be? This bill is put together by the House and the Senate, each with different ideas about what they think

is the best way to solve our problems, if we can. Clearly, each body has strong feelings about certain issues that they match up when we attempt to move ahead in some positive direction.

Some will get up here in the next couple of days and argue about some of the provisions in this bill. I say right now to the Senate and to the American people, some of the provisions that will be argued I agree with. Some of the provisions I don't agree with; that is, some that people suggest should be changed in this bill. But I remind everyone that we didn't get to this point without giving and taking, without putting and taking back, without arguing one way and then not winning it and having to go the other way. I suggest that everybody in this body knows—and if they don't right now, they will soon—that across this land there are millions of farmers, who farm all kinds of products, who are either up here on the Hill or on the telephones talking about passing this bill because it has a giant provision to convert corn and related products of our country over time to ethanol which will, in turn, be used in our automobiles in lieu of gasoline that comes from crude oil.

We in the Senate, I say to my good friend, were led in those negotiations for ethanol by the distinguished Senator from Iowa, Mr. GRASSLEY. He has been a staunch advocate, along with the minority leader, Senator DASCHLE, for a major American ethanol program. I can tell my colleagues that in negotiating with the House, they weren't as excited about the program, the project, or the size as we were under the leadership of Senator GRASSLEY. So to get what we wanted, we had to ask them what they wanted. They didn't wait around for us to ask. That is sort of a way of saying it. They told us what they needed. In other words, they said: You want that, we want something.

I will tell my colleagues shortly of the numerous provisions they wanted that are in this bill that brought us forth today with the most significant program for farmers and the production of ethanol to take the place of crude oil that we have ever had in this country.

Let me proceed with my original thoughts and then move over to the subject matter which has brought a number of people into a state of opposition to this bill. Let me complete a few thoughts.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates that this bill will cost \$26 billion over 10 years. Some people have much bigger numbers, but what they are talking about in those numbers is not where we have obligated the expenditure of funds. They are authorized. They are to be funded, if ever, later. They are statements of policy, but not statements of policy accompanied by programs that must be paid for.

What I am talking about is \$26 billion that has to do with the taxes that are included in this bill. That averages \$2.6 billion a year. People can talk about