

plug-in hybrids today. He drives such a car every day. It gets 150 miles to the gallon. The electricity that it takes to drive the vehicle 40 miles costs about one-tenth as much as it costs to drive the same distance on gasoline. I understand that General Motors believes it can start selling such plug-in hybrid vehicles to American consumers within the next 2 years.

At the same hearing in May, the head of global research at General Electric testified that the company had already developed a hybrid electric locomotive.

Even if you count the pollution from the powerplants—including coal-fired powerplants—used to charge a plug-in hybrid or fully electric vehicle, or to run an idling truck or ship, powering these vehicles with electricity releases far, far less pollution into the environment than powering them with oil does.

The underlying bill contains some language to help accelerate the deployment of these electrification technologies in the transportation sector. The DRIVE Electric amendment would strengthen those provisions substantially. There is broad, bipartisan support here in the Senate for strengthening them. There is no reason not to strengthen them.

Here is what the DRIVE Electric amendment would do: The DRIVE Electric amendment would expand the Advanced Transportation Technology Program in section 245 of H.R. 6 and augment the Energy Storage Competitiveness Program in section 244 of H.R. 6.

More specifically, the DRIVE Electric amendment would expand the near-term vehicle technology deployment program in the underlying bill by adding a revolving loan program. This will maximize the effectiveness of the program in stimulating the installation of technologies to reduce petroleum use and cut emissions. In addition, the amendment sets forth types of projects—including port, truck stop and airport electrification—that will qualify for the program.

The amendment includes a program to remove barriers for existing and new applications of electric drive and hybrid transportation technologies. It would establish an electricity usage program to increase the understanding of and management of the electricity grid as a source of power for the transportation sector.

The amendment would also direct the Energy Department and the Environmental Protection Agency to develop information on the grid-side of electric drive technology. It would authorize grants for electric utilities to promote customer programs for load management and off-peak use.

While the underlying bill would allow for basic and applied energy storage research, the DRIVE Electric amendment would establish an electric drive transportation research and development program. That program would address additional research needs, including:

high efficiency on-board and off-board charging components; high power and energy-efficient drive-train systems for passenger and commercial vehicles and for nonroad vehicles; control system development and power-train development and integration; application of nano-materials technology, and use of smart vehicle and grid interconnection devices and software.

The amendment also would direct the Energy Department to evaluate the benefits of plug-in electric drive technology, by creating testing programs to assess the full potential of benefits in terms of reducing criteria air pollutant emissions, energy use, and petroleum consumption.

The amendment also would establish a nationwide education program for electric drive transportation technology, including financial assistance to create new university-level degree programs for needed engineers, supporting student plug-in hybrid electric vehicle competitions, and other educational efforts.

Finally, the amendment would update the fleet acquisition program established under the Energy Policy Act of 1992 to assure that fleet operators subject to that law can choose electric drive transportation technologies, including hybrid electric vehicles, for compliance.

I believe this amendment is exactly the kind of commonsense, win-win, bipartisan measure that the American people like to see coming out of Congress. I respectfully ask that my colleagues support the DRIVE Electric amendment.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

IN MEMORIAM: DR. RON BANGASSER

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the lifetime of achievement and community leadership of Dr. Ron Bangasser. Dr. Bangasser passed away in Redlands on May 2, 2007.

Born on January 25, 1950, in Freeport, IL, Ron Bangasser served the Inland Empire, his State and our Nation as a physician and advocate for health and wellness. After completing medical school at Chicago Medical School, Dr. Bangasser trained at San Bernardino County Medical Center in southern California, later served at St. Luke's Presbyterian Hospital in Milwaukee, and with the Navy Diving Medical Officer's Training School. Most recently, he was a physician with the Beaver Medical Group in Inland Southern California, where he served as medical director and director of external affairs. He also served as the chief of staff at nearby Redlands Community Hospital. In 1986, Dr. Bangasser founded the Paul F. Bangasser Wound Care Center at Redlands Community Hospital, named after and dedicated to his father.

Dr. Bangasser was a tremendous advocate for patients and physicians,

serving with a number of medical associations. For 28 years he provided key leadership for the San Bernardino County Medical Society, the California Medical Association, and the American Medical Association. He served as the speaker for the California Medical Association's house of delegates, and as chair for the California delegation to the American Medical Association. He also served as chair of the California Medical Association's finance committee, and vice chair of the California Medical Association's hospital medical staff section.

Dr. Bangasser was also the recipient of numerous prestigious awards and honors. He received the Nicholas P. Krikes, M.D. Award for Outstanding Contributions to the San Bernardino County Medical Society, the American Medical Association Pride in the Professions Award, Riverside County Medical Association's Outstanding Contribution to Organized Medicine Award, the California Medical Association Young Physician's Joseph Boyle Young at Heart Award, the James C. MacLaggan, M.D. Political Action Award, and the Medical Board of California's Physician Humanitarian Award.

While serving in each of his varied capacities, Dr. Bangasser also found the time to serve as the team physician for the San Bernardino Valley College football team for 22 years. San Bernardino Valley College honored him for these years of service and awarded him its Distinguished Service Award in 1999.

Dr. Ron Bangasser will be remembered for all that he did to make his community and this country a better place to live. His was a life well lived. ●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Evans, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:04 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Ms. Niland, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 2638. An act making appropriations for the Department of Homeland Security for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2642. An act making appropriations for military construction, the Department of