

security and our economy, is that using less oil and gas reduces the greenhouse gas emissions that are contributing to global climate change. This is why renewable energy incentives are essential.

In addition to many energy provisions that will help put America on track to energy independence, the bill also incorporates about \$27 billion in several vital tax extensions for American families and businesses. In order for our country to remain a leader we must continue to be competitive. This is why the research and development tax credit is essential. As a long time supporter of the R&D tax credit, I am glad to see its inclusion into this legislation. This credit allows for companies to plan long term projects which translate into new technologies and new jobs. In 2005, 856 Maryland firms reported R&D activity to the IRS. My goal is to increase that number. I want more businesses—not only in Maryland, but across the country—participating in research and development for our Nation.

The bill also extends tax provisions for tuition expenses, out-of-pocket expenses for teachers, deductions for State and local sales taxes, and real property tax relief for nonitemizers. It also expands the child tax credit to help more than 13 million children and their families. Specifically, the bill extends the above-the-line deduction up to \$250 for education expenses for all elementary and secondary teachers. It also provides aid for the rising costs of tuition. By providing an above-the-line deduction of \$2,000 or \$4,000, depending on income, for qualified higher education expenses, we help alleviate the burden of rising education costs for American families. The bill also expands the child tax credit to help more than 13 million children and their families. The bill also extends the option for taxpayers to take an itemized deduction for State and local general sales taxes, and provides a 1-year deduction of \$350 for property taxes for nonitemizing taxpayers.

Senator BAUCUS has also included a very important provision that places a 1-year "patch" on the alternative minimum tax, AMT. This provision translates into helping millions of Americans across the country and specifically hundreds of thousands of Marylanders. The bill increases the exemption amounts to \$46,200 for individuals and \$69,950 for married couples. It also allows personal credits to be used against the AMT. This provision is essential, otherwise American families will fall victim to a tax that we never intended them to have to pay.

This bill will provide good jobs here at home, put us on a path toward sustainable energy security, and combat global climate change. I hope we will be allowed to consider this measure. The American people sent us here to do a job: to legislate. If we can't even get to this bill, we are not doing our job.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, as some of us who are not in this building know, there is a raging storm outside. But it is all over the Eastern part of the country. I got a call from one Senator stuck at a small airport in northern New York. We have calls from all over the country that airplanes are messed up. La Guardia is not going to have anything going until 11 o'clock. When things back up there, it affects the whole country. So we would wind up probably with 20 Senators missing the vote at 5:30.

So I have spoken to the Republican leader. We both think for the safety of Members, if nothing else—which there is plenty else—but for the safety of Members, so they can kind of calm down and not try to do things they should not do at this last hour or so—I ask unanimous consent that the previously scheduled vote on cloture, which was scheduled at 5:30 p.m., today, be delayed to occur at 2:15 p.m. Tuesday, June 17.

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

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll of the Senate.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BROWN. 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. BROWN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to vitiate the order for the remaining debate time.

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

Mr. BROWN. 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. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. STABENOW). Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

#### FATHER'S DAY

• Mr. BYRD. Madam President, summer will not officially begin until June 21, but already the summer heat and thunderstorms are upon us. Lawns are lush and green, calling for the mower at least every week to maintain their

carefully manicured appearance. Gardens are bursting with blooms that hold the promise of juicy red tomatoes, crisp green peppers, and a never-ending supply of zucchini. Along rural roadsides, great rafts of daylilies growing are beginning to bloom in waves of firecracker orange starbursts above the dense green foliage.

Despite the lawn and garden chores that beg for attention, one day this weekend was reserved for pleasure. Sunday, June 15, was Father's Day. Across the Nation, ties disappeared from store shelves, golf paraphernalia was snapped up, funny cards were bought, and restaurant reservations were made. On Sunday, many fathers were encouraged to take a break, to enjoy a brunch buffet, and to open some of the classic father's day gifts—those ties, golf tees, or cologne. This week, men across the Nation will sport brightly hued new ties and exotic scents that wordlessly label them as proud fathers.

Fatherhood is a wonderful experience but also a nerve-racking one. It is full of high points, from passing on new skills and old interests to a new generation, to witnessing the achievements of our offspring as they achieve success on their own. The sight of large father's hands tenderly cradling a tiny morsel of newborn humanity is enough to melt the hardest heart. But it is also a frightening responsibility, knowing that one's every word and action, for better or for worse, is being absorbed into the creation of a new character. Fathers who praise their child's hard work and perseverance in the face of setbacks, or who demonstrate the high value they place on being a good sport, build strong, resilient children who learn to work well with others throughout their lives. Fathers who lose their tempers at Little League coaches teach their children by example a lesson in rudeness and incivility that likely is very different than the manners that they preach. Clarence Budington Kelland put it best when he said, "He didn't tell me how to live; he lived, and let me watch him do it."

Fathers typically spend fewer hours in the company of their children than do their mothers. Therefore, each hour spent together is precious, a fact that can be difficult to remember when fathers come home from work tired, and that lawn still needs to be mowed or those bills need to be paid. But in the years to come, as children grow, it is the time spent playing catch, or building a doghouse, or even watching a football game together, that both father and child will remember and cherish—not that the lawn was properly edged and raked.

I know that the times spent with my Dad that I remember most fondly were just those few quiet minutes that we spent together most days, when I would meet Dad walking home from work. He would share with me a little cake that he had saved from his lunch, and we would talk and walk together.