

hope we can get that done and bring the two pieces together. We are going to be able to provide some relief to millions of Americans.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SANDERS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

ENERGY

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, it looks as though I am the clean-up hitter tonight, before we close the session. It has been this Senator's privilege to be sitting in the chair while a number of these, our colleagues, have been speaking from their perspective. One of the unique features of this democracy is that there are 50 States, each with two Senators who sometimes have points of view that are different from each other. But out of the collective will, by the give-and-take process—as the Good Book says, “Come let us reason together”—we try to forge a consensus in which to govern the Nation and to set policy through law and then abide by the rule of law.

What a great privilege it is for this Senator to be a part of that and try to articulate the interests as I see the national interests through the lens as I perceive it, through the interests of my State, as well as the country as a whole.

The fact is, we are in a deplorable condition where we are now importing 66.2 percent of our daily consumption of oil from places such as the Persian Gulf, Nigeria, and Venezuela. These are very unstable parts of the world. The President can certainly appreciate the fact that if we did not have to do that, we would be not only economically a lot better off but just imagine what our defense posture would be if we did not have to protect the sea lines. The U.S. Navy has to protect the sea lines, not only for our interests but a lot of the others of the world's interests in all those areas coming around—out of the Persian Gulf, on the west coast of Africa, and so forth.

It is also true that those sea lines and that flow of oil is increasingly under jeopardy because of terrorist groups such as al-Qaida that can figure it out and strike in undefended oil-producing facilities, as they have tried to do in Saudi Arabia and who knows where else. All of those jitters that ripple throughout the economy come because people think this tight oil supply is going to be cut off—as well it may be.

Back in the early 1970s it was cut off because of a cartel called OPEC, and they decided to cut back on production. You remember in the early 1970s

that drove oil from something like \$2 a barrel up to \$10 a barrel.

This has progressively gotten worse to the point that the United States is now dependent for almost two-thirds of our daily consumption of oil coming from foreign shores. The United States only has 3 percent of the world's oil reserves. Yet the United States consumes 25 percent of the world's oil production.

It does not take a mathematical genius to realize if we want to do something about our vulnerability, if we only have 3 percent of the world's oil reserves but we consume 25 percent of the world's oil production, what is the ultimate solution? We have to wean ourselves from oil. We have to go to alternative fuels. We have to vigorously, through research and development, develop new engines. We have to use renewables, such as solar and wind and geothermal. Indeed, we have to get serious about conservation.

This Nation simply has not done this with great vigor. It is clearly the hope of this Senator that the next President of the United States is going to have this at the top of his agenda. Then, this Congress, combined with the next President, is going to be able to make some major policy shifts about our energy consumption and from where we get our energy. But, in the meantime, the scare, the fright, the pain of \$4.11-per-gallon gasoline; the scare, the fright of oil, what normally would be at \$55 a barrel, according to an ExxonMobil executive testifying, under normal supply and demand—it is not anywhere close to that. It is way up in the 130s, and it actually got up over \$140 a barrel.

Because of that pain right now we have to act. There are those who have trooped in here and over and over their mantra is, as they hold up a big sign—and it is primarily the ones on that side of the aisle who say: “Drill here. Drill now,” as if that is the solution. This Senator has no problem with drilling if it is done responsibly and it is done in an area that there is not a prohibitively painful tradeoff.

What do I mean? I want to give you an example. It was this Senator who, 3 years ago, had to start a filibuster to stop a punitive measure against the defense interests of the United States. I had to stop it with a filibuster. That was an attempt to drill oil in the eastern Gulf of Mexico off of Florida. That happens to be the largest testing and training area for the U.S. military in the world. Why do you think we train all of our F-22 pilots at a base in Florida? Why do you think we train the pilots for the still-being-developed F-35 Joint Strike Fighter in Florida? It is because they have all of that unrestricted space over the Gulf of Mexico.

When the U.S. Navy shut down their training facility on the island of Vieques next to the island of Puerto Rico, why did they bring all of that U.S. Naval Atlantic Fleet training to the Gulf of Mexico? It is because it is restricted air space where they can

have joint air, sea, and, at Eglin Air Force Base, land exercises in the training of our military.

We are testing new weapons systems that go hundreds of miles. Where? In the testing and training area of the Gulf of Mexico. And this Senator has shared with this Senate a letter from the Secretary of Defense that says: Do not drill for oil and gas in the military mission area of the eastern gulf testing and training area.

So 2 years ago, we put together a compromise. The oil forces wanted to have 2.5 million acres headed on a line straight for the west coast of Florida. This Senator worked it out with Senator LANDRIEU and several others. We arranged not 2.5 million acres to drill in, but 8.3 million acres, four times as much. But we kept it away from the military mission area, the military testing and training area, which also kept it away from the coast of Florida.

So when these folks come up with this mantra: Drill here, drill now, it is not taking into consideration that we have been through this drill before, and we have crafted a compromise. You know, we put that into law, as Senator LANDRIEU has shared, on different parts of the offshore. She showed you where we put that into law. It is prohibited under law, not by Presidential proclamation, it is prohibited by law until the year 2022.

We did that for the reasons I have already said. We thought we balanced the interests, and that was 2 years ago. And do you know what. Not one acre of that 8.3 million acres has been drilled. So this mantra of “drill here, drill now,” as if we do not have the area to drill, this Senator worked his fingers to the bone to get a compromise to satisfy all of the interests, including the drilling interests, and not one acre of that has been drilled.

As a matter of fact, not any of the 32 million acres under lease in the Gulf of Mexico has been drilled. This Senator is not opposed to drilling. This Senator wants to drill in the 32 million acres that are already available in the Gulf of Mexico and not harm the preparation and training of the United States military to defend our country.

Now, that is a simple message I want to share, and I had to wait until this hour in order to get the time to come out here and maybe, through the lens of that camera, some of this message is getting shared.

There is one more thing I want to share with the Senate that simply is not true. The folks who come out here with this simple message, drill here, drill now, constantly say: In all the hurricanes that they had there was not any oil spill. That is not true. I want to show you a satellite photo 4 days after Hurricane Katrina had already hit land up here on the Mississippi and the Louisiana coast. I want you to see the oil spills as recorded in a photograph from space. That is what it looked like 4 days after Katrina.

Now, I hope this debunks all of those folks coming up here and saying there

were no oil spills. I think they have gotten a lot safer, but don't come up here and say there are no oil spills. Let's be realistic about it. Let's use the most modern techniques where we are going to drill in those 32 million acres out in the gulf that are leased but not drilled.

After Katrina, 7.5 million gallons of oil were spilled. This satellite image was taken by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration 4 days after Katrina.

If you do not believe me because I am saying it, let me point you to the report that was produced by the Bush administration after Katrina. This is from "The Federal Response to Hurricane Katrina, Lessons Learned." It has the seal of the U.S. Government, written in February 2006. I want to give you the quote on page 8 of this report:

In fact, Hurricane Katrina caused at least ten oil spills, releasing the same quantity of oil as some of the worst oil spills in U.S. history.

Louisiana reported at least six major oil spills of over 100,000 gallons and four medium spills of over 10,000 gallons. All told, more than 7.4 million gallons poured into the Gulf Coast region's waterways, over two-thirds of the amount that spilled during America's worst oil disaster, the rupturing of the Exxon Valdez tanker off the Alaska coast in 1989.

That is the administration's own report.

In the next hurricane that came a few weeks later, Hurricane Rita, a large vessel struck a submerged oil platform that sank during the storm. Up to 3 million gallons of oil spilled in the gulf because of that, and only half of that oil was recovered.

There have been plenty of technological advances on safety. But it has not ensured the safety of all that oil infrastructure that Senator LANDRIEU showed you an aerial photo of in the Gulf of Mexico.

Listen to what the Bush administration's Minerals Management Service predicts. They predict there will be one oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico of 1,000 barrels of oil each year, and one spill of at least 10,000 barrels of oil every 3 to 4 years in the future. That is their prediction.

And, of course, if we have another Katrina—and remember, Katrina was only a Category 3 storm, which is up to 135 miles per hour. Guess what would happen if you get to a Category 5, which are winds in excess of 146 miles per hour, and the destructive forces of each mile per hour, when you get into that category, go up exponentially.

Well, I think I made my point. More intense hurricanes could mean more big spills and more damage to our fragile coastline and wetlands, our military mission, our gulf coast beaches, and the tourism industry they support, and the ecosystem. It could be devastating and decimated by a huge oil spill.

Now, we have to have balance because we are behind the eight ball since we import two-thirds of our daily consumption of oil. What this Senator

wants is for us to balance the approach to this: R&D, alternative fuels, conservation, stretch the envelope, develop new engines, drill for oil, and do it in a responsible way where we have already provided the leases.

COMMEMORATING THE ALPHA KAPPA ALPHA SORORITY, INCORPORATED

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I welcome the women of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., to Capitol Hill in celebration of its centennial anniversary.

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. is our Nation's first African-American sorority, and was founded on January 15, 1908. Since then, the sorority has always exemplified its motto of "being of service to all mankind."

Over the course of ten decades, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., has grown its membership to include over 200,000 members throughout the United States, Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Caribbean. Through the years, the sorority has remained committed to improving the lives of countless Americans through its involvement in programs including the Mississippi Health Project, the Job Corps, and the African Village Development Program.

In my home State of Nevada alone, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.'s Theta Theta Omega Chapter has provided over \$100,000 in scholarships to deserving African-American female Clark County high school students, while its Kappa Xi Chapter has a distinguished record of service both on the University of Nevada Las Vegas campus and throughout the community.

In the coming century, I am certain that this illustrious organization will continue to empower communities and respond to the increasingly complex issues facing the world. I commend the women of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., for their 100 years of distinguished service to our great Nation.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, this year we are celebrating Alpha Kappa Alpha, Inc. sorority's 100th birthday. This week, more than 20,000 members from all over the country have come to Washington, DC, to participate in a week-long program of forums and seminars with a focus on leadership, sisterhood and service, known as the Centennial Boulé. The theme of this week's celebration is the "Centennial Commitment to Leadership."

The week's events will culminate in today's Unity March where members from the nine African-American Greek fraternities and sororities marched to the Capitol.

AKA's International President, Barbara McKinzie, who has lived in Shreveport, LA, says the qualities that have sustained AKA for a century are "sisterhood and service." Her administration is committed to ESP: Economics, Service and Partnership.

AKA is the first Greek-letter sorority established by African-American

women for African-American, college-educated women. It was founded by nine enterprising Howard University women, led by Ethel Hedgeman Lyle, on January 15, 1908.

Now the membership has grown to 975 chapters worldwide and is 200,000-strong. Among the famous AKAs are Maya Angelou, Gladys Knight and Alicia Keys; and Members of the House of Representatives include Eddie Bernice Johnson and Sheila Jackson Lee of Texas, and Diane Watson of California. Powerful women across America both in the private sector and government represent the AKA sisterhood. Three members of my staff are proud to be a part of this sisterhood: my office manager Alicia Williams, acting State director Tari Bradford, and my New Orleans constituent services representative Sheraé Hunter.

The AKA sorority, founded before women had the right to vote by women one generation away from slavery, has been an instrumental group in raising the profile of African-American women and has worked tirelessly to knock down barriers to advancement in our society. The sisterhood has consistently encouraged academic achievement, leadership and service.

Members remain active for their whole lives and are encouraged to contribute to their communities. Each chapter has its own community service focus. The Gamma Eta Omega Alumnae Chapter in Baton Rouge, for instance, raises money through an annual fashion show for scholarships for high school seniors and sorority undergraduates and also sponsors the Leadership Fellows Institute each year to promote leadership among high school students.

The Delta Lamda Omega Chapter in Shreveport gathers for "A Day On and Not a Day Off," where sisters take off work to volunteer in the community. Chapters all over Louisiana are similarly committed to their communities. In the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005, AKAs from all over the country came to the aid of hurricane survivors along the gulf coast and helped with our recovery effort.

It is with great pride that we welcome all AKAs to the birthplace of the sisterhood, Washington, DC, as they embark on another groundbreaking century.

40TH ANNIVERSARY OF SPECIAL OLYMPICS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, today is the 40th anniversary of Special Olympics, an organization that has touched the lives of people with intellectual disabilities in Nevada and throughout the country. This spring, I had the chance to meet with one such Special Olympics athlete: Cari Davis, a resident of Henderson, NV, who has been winning medals since beginning her athletic career in 1988. It is my privilege today to recognize the achievements of all Special Olympics athletes, as well as the