

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 Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

#### RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until the hour of 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:29 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. CARPER).

#### RENEWABLE ENERGY AND JOB CREATION ACT OF 2008—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who seeks recognition?

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum and I ask unanimous consent that the time be equally divided.

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

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ENSIGN. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. ENSIGN. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the importance of the renewable energy amendment that is coming before us on the next vote in the Senate. For the past several months I have worked with Senator CANTWELL, as well as many other Members of this body, in a bipartisan manner to develop a way forward on renewable energies.

We know and agree that more renewable green energy is needed for the United States. That was evidenced by an amendment that Senator CANTWELL and I brought to the floor on the housing bill last April that passed by a vote of 88 to 8. We all realize that there is broad bipartisan consensus and that we want more renewable green energy for the United States.

The question was, how do we get it enacted into law? What we have before us today, through working together in a bipartisan way once again, is a compromise of how to offset the cost of some of these tax credits.

I am very pleased that, with the help of Chairman BAUCUS and Ranking Member GRASSLEY of the Finance Committee, Senator CANTWELL and I were able to come up with this renewable energy amendment that is fully offset and fully paid for, so that we can get this bill finally passed into law.

What does this mean for our country? Well, first, I think most Americans are well aware of what is going on in Washington right now. Our country is on the brink of financial catastrophe. We are working very hard to stop this from happening and bring consumer confidence back to our financial markets.

This, however, only solves the immediate crisis. We have a longer term eco-

nomie problem in this country. There is nothing more important to our economy than having a comprehensive energy plan for the United States. Renewable energy is only part of that comprehensive energy plan for the United States though.

Within the bill we have before us, there are strong incentives for all types of clean energy, including solar power, geothermal, wind, and biofuels. If somebody wants to add solar power panels to their home, there are currently some incentives in today's law, but those incentives are not adequate. We encourage more and more people to put solar power into their own homes so they can actually help solve the energy problems we have in this country in their own home.

I think it is important that the Senate say to the House of Representatives, let's pass this bill in a strong bipartisan fashion. This is so the House of Representatives will take up this bill, pass it, and send it to the President where he can sign this bipartisan piece of legislation into law.

I strongly believe that we need a comprehensive energy plan for the United States of America that includes an all-of-the-above approach. This would include alternative green energies, drilling for more oil and natural gas, more clean coal energy, and clean nuclear energy, all of which include more conservation for the United States. We need all of this if we are to stop sending \$700 billion overseas. A lot of that money is going to countries who do not like us. Some is even going to fund terrorist organizations that want to do harm to the United States of America.

It is critical that we have a comprehensive energy plan. Let's at least do the renewable energy part of the energy plan, today. I want to thank all who have worked so hard on this. On the solar part of this bill alone, it is estimated that 400,000 jobs could become permanent in the United States between now and the year 2016. These people would be building solar panels for houses, for businesses, for powerplants and the like. Over 1 million jobs will be produced in the building of a powerplant.

This is a good bill for our economy. It is a good bill for the power generation of the United States of America, and it is a good bill for our environment.

In many ways, this is a very exciting bill. Right now, unfortunately, it is being overshadowed by what is happening in our financial markets. But that does not mean this bill is not important; it is more important than ever. I encourage all of our Senators to vote for it, and then the message needs to go to the House of Representatives: Let's not delay on this bill; let's get this bill signed because this is the last week of business we have this year. Let's get it passed in the House and sent to the President so that he can sign this bill into law and we can start getting these jobs now.

I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum and ask unanimous consent that the time be equally divided between both sides.

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

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DORGAN. 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. DORGAN. Mr. President, this afternoon we will vote on energy tax extenders or tax incentives for renewable energy. I wanted to make a comment about the importance of this legislation. I believe this will be our tenth vote to try to extend the tax incentives for renewable energy. It has been previously blocked nine times, which is almost unbelievable to me.

But at a time when we face a very severe energy problem in this country, and when we need to incentivize and begin developing additional renewable sources of energy to make us less dependant on Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, Venezuela, Iraq, at a time when we need to be less dependent and produce other kinds of energy, we have been blocked in extending these energy tax credits. It makes no sense at all to me.

If you are going to address the energy problem in this country, we need to do a lot of things. We need to conserve more. Yes, we need to drill more, and we need much greater energy efficiency. We need to do a whole lot of things, but this country needs to move ahead with respect to renewable energy on a much more aggressive path.

A substantial amount of energy comes every day from the Sun, and we use precious little of it. A substantial amount of energy is available from the wind, and we use too little of it.

How does this compare to other energy resources? Now, here is what we have done in the past for those who look for oil and gas. In 1916 this country said: If you are searching for oil and gas, we are going to give you a big fat set of tax breaks, because we want you to find oil and gas. That has existed for nearly 100 years, those tax incentives for those who search for oil and gas. Contrast that with what we have done for those who want to proceed with renewable energy such as wind and solar.

In 1992, we put in place the production tax credit. These were short-term and rather shallow tax incentives. They have been extended short term five times. They have been allowed to expire three times. We have seen projects to put up new wind turbines and new solar projects put on the shelf because these tax incentives have been in a start-stop, stutter step approach. It makes no sense. It is a pathetic, anemic response.

This country should be saying: Here is where we are headed for the next decade. For the next decade you can