state's electricity. That has the California Energy Commission worried electricity shortages might arise if older, marginal plants are shut down before there is replacement power available.

Building conventional power units is notoriously tough in Southern California because of air-quality problems and difficulty getting air-emissions credits, which are essentially rights to spew specified amounts of pollutants.

Early this year, the local air agency, the South Coast Air Quality Management District, imposed a moratorium on issuing air credits from its ''bank'' that affected 10 power plants that were under development.

''It's too early to tell how the pieces will fit together, but all the agencies and utilities are talking,'' said Edison's Mr. Hemphill. ''Something has to be worked out.''

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, countries such as Denmark and Germany have done the same thing. Denmark, which is often cited for its wind power, has pushed its windmills up to 20 percent of its electrical capacity. That sounds good. Many people regard 20 percent as about the theoretical limit that wind power can supply to a total electric grid, even for a small country such as Denmark. Yet Denmark hasn't closed even one single coal plant as a result of all these new windmills. So it is still dependent on fossil fuels, and it has the most expensive electricity in Europe because of all of its renewable electricity. Meanwhile, France, which has gone to 80 percent nuclear power, has per capita carbon emissions 30 percent lower than those of Denmark, and it has so much cheap electricity that France is making $3 billion a year exporting its electricity—mostly from nuclear power—to other countries.

So what are we getting into when we say we are going to solve our energy problems by passing a law telling ourselves we have to get 15, 17, or 20 percent of our electricity from renewable sources, very narrowly defined, by 2020?

First, it is important to point out that 80 percent of the facilities built to satisfy State renewable standards have been windmills. So a renewable electricity standard is really a national windmill policy instead of a national energy policy. Wind turbines are easy to put up, especially in remote areas. We have built 35,000 megawatts in total wind energy capacity, which represents an increase of more than 100 percent in the past 3 years. But most wind turbines only generate electricity about 33 percent of the time. That is how often the wind blows. The best wind farms—the ones on the eastern and west coast mountaintops or on the windy plains of the Dakotas—operate a little more than 40 percent of the time. That means our 35,000 megawatts in windmill capacity only generates about 10,000 megawatts at best—the equivalent of ten standard nuclear reactors.

Moreover, the wind doesn't always blow when it is needed and often blows when it is not needed. The strongest winds are at night or during the fall and spring, which are periods of low demand, while the periods with the least wind are hot summer afternoons, when the electricity demand peaks. Wind and other renewables are not dependable in the terms that utilities need dependable electricity. The Tennessee Valley Authority, in the region where I live, says it can only count on the wind power it produces in Tennessee and even the wind power it buys from the Dakotas about 10 to 15 percent of the time when it is actually needed. That is also what has happened in Denmark. They have to give away almost half of their wind-generated electricity to Germany and Sweden at bargain prices because it comes at a time when it is not needed. The result has been that the Danes pay the highest electrical prices in Europe and still haven't achieved much reduction in carbon emissions.

Then there is the matter of subsidies. We hear a lot about oil subsidies in the Senate. I suggest that when we talk about big oil, we also talk about big wind. The U.S. taxpayers are already committed to spending $29 billion over the next 10 years to subsidize the investors, corporations, and the banks that have financed the big wind turbines, and they only produce 1.8 percent of our electricity. If we went to 20 percent of our electricity from wind in the United States, that would be $170 billion from American taxpayers.

Windmills are and can be said to be a big success compared to solar electricity at today's prices. California now has more solar electricity than any other State, and in March, the California Public Utilities Commission announced the opening of one of the largest photovoltaic stations in California—21 megawatts. Solar power makes more sense as a supplement to our power by offsetting some of our demand by placing solar panels on rooftops, not large-scale electricity plants. We all hope we can reduce the cost of solar power, which today costs four times as much as electricity produced from coal.

These are technologies we are counting on to solve our energy problems. I think we have to exercise some caution here. The assumption is that all we have to do is subsidize these technologies and get them up and running, and they will find their place in the market. That doesn't seem to be true. All of these technologies still have much to prove before they can shoulder a significant portion of our electricity. Biomass facilities need to be placed where they are most efficient and can be used as a supplement to low-cost reliable sources of electricity that already provide the large amounts of clean and reliable energy we need. We already have a proven technology in nuclear power that provides us with 20 percent of our electricity and 70 percent of our carbon-free electricity. We should focus on that.

As the President and our colleagues consider our clean energy future tomorrow and the things we agree on, we can agree to electrify half our cars and trucks, and we can agree to build nuclear plants for carbon-free electricity. We can certainly agree on doubling energy research and development to bring down the cost of solar power by a factor of 4 and to create a 500-mile battery for electric cars.

But we need to remember, as we think about the next 10, 20, or 30 years, the United States is not a desert island. We use 25 percent of all the energy in the world to produce about 25 percent of all the money, which we distribute among ourselves, 5 percent of the people in the world. We ought to keep that high standard of living. We need to remember we are not a desert island. Someday, solar, wind, and the Earth may be an important supplement to our energy needs, but for today, we are not going to power the United States on electricity produced by a windmill, a controlled bonfire, and a few solar panels.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. UDALL of New Mexico). The Senator from Kansas is recognized.

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, I appreciate my colleague commenting about energy. There is a bipartisan energy bill that I hope the President discusses tomorrow. It came out of the Energy Committee on a bipartisan vote. It doesn't increase cap and trade.

I certainly agree with my colleague on nuclear power, although we have some disagreement about wind. We have some nice places in Kansas for wind energy generation. I talked with the operators of the Smoky Hills Wind Farm last week. It operates between 40 and 45 percent of the time—the highest operating unit in the world. This company is a global wind-producing company. It is a very nice operation. I am not saying you can power it all off of wind. I am a nuclear supporter myself.

I also believe we have nice places to do wind power and a nice generation capacity that is complementary to the rest of the energy grid in the United States. Kansas is the second windiest State in the country. There are many times I have been in Kansas and have wondered, who else could be windier? We have a lot of consistent wind. There are places we can produce wind power on a very advantageous basis for the rest of the country. It is my hope that we can have those on a complementary basis but that we don't do a cap-and-trade system; rather, that we go with the bipartisan bill that passed the Energy Committee.

TRIBUTE TO MANUTE BOL

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, I wish to speak about the untimely passing of a giant—a giant in the hearts of the Sudanese people but also a literal giant. At 7 foot 7 inches, Manute Bol was a hero in his native home of Sudan, not for the fact alone that he was a pro basketball player in the United States or that he killed a lion with a spear while working as a cow

herder—no, Manute was a hero because of his advocacy for his fellow countrymen, a true humanitarian.

Manute began his NBA career in Washington in 1985, when he was drafted in the second round by the Washington Bullets. That year, Manute set the NBA rookie record with a total of 397 blocks. He continued to break shot-blocking records throughout his career and is the only player in NBA history to block more shots than points scored.

Manute coined the idiom or the phrase ''my bad,'' which quickly became the standard for those players owning up to their own errors on the court. ''My bad.'' To own up to one's own mistakes is a true measure of one's character, and it is no surprise that Manute leaves this legacy to the NBA.

Manute had a gentle nature and unmistakable humor. He was also a Christian, and his faith guided his advocacy for his fellow Sudanese brothers and sisters.

Manute was the son of a Dinka tribal chief and was given the name ''Manute,'' which means ''special blessing.'' He was, indeed, special, and what made him special was not his height but his heart. Manute often returned to Sudan to visit refugee camps, and he subsequently created the Ring True Foundation to assist those less fortunate than himself.

Manute moved to Olathe, KS, in 2007 to be closer to his family and continue his advocacy for Sudan as a spokesman for a Kansas-based nonprofit, Sudan Sunrise, which raises money to build schools and churches in Sudan. In 2006, Manute participated in the Sudan Freedom Work, a 3-week march from the U.N. building in New York to the U.S. Capitol in Washington, DC. He was admitted to the United States as a religious refugee, and in his final years in Kansas, Manute was working on a project to have Christians and Muslims work together to build a school in his hometown of Turlie, Sudan.

The world needs more Manute Bols—individuals who dedicate their lives to others. Our thoughts and prayers go out to Manute's family, friends, and the people of Sudan.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona is recognized.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to engage in a colloquy with Dr. BARRASSO.

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

HEALTHCARE

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, as I understand it, it is about 90 days since the President signed the legislation known to some as ObamaCare and to others as the Medicare reform bill. But there have been some interesting developments in the intervening 90 days.

To quote the Speaker of the House, she said at the time, ''We have to pass the bill so that you can find out what's in it.'' We are finding out what is in it. Remarkable events have taken place, ranging from the implementation that means that more than half—51 percent—of all employees in 2013 will be in plans that aren't grandfathered, despite the President's comment that if you like your insurance policy, you can keep it. Nearly 7 in 10—69 percent employees, 80 percent of workers, and small businesses—would lose their current plan within 3 short years.

Mr. President, I would like for my friend, Dr. BARRASSO, to explain exactly how that happens. First, I would like to mention the issue du jour which, of course, is headlined on Politico this morning: ''Medicare Tussle Stymies Hill. Rift between Pelosi and Reid stands in the way of funding compromise.''

I think it is important to recognize the reason we did not do the so-called doc fix is because the majority did not want to do the doc fix, which means not implementing the 21-percent cut in reimbursement for doctors who treat Medicare patients. The reason we did not was because they had cooked the books on the cost of ObamaCare.

The fact is, they kept counting into the cost—in order to keep their commitment that it would cost less than $1 trillion—they kept counting in that there would be the 21-percent cut, a $281 billion difference over 10 years.

The AMA and all of those people who signed up with this bill are now saying: Why are you not doing the doc fix? We did the doc fix on Friday, I believe. It is now in the House, and we will probably do the doc fix. But why the delay? The delay is simply because they did not want to. On the floor of this Senate, they did not want to do the doc fix because of the budgetary impact on how they were selling this proposal to the American people.

I ask my colleague, Dr. BARRASSO, to comment on that point and also what we are finding out as to how many Americans are actually going to lose the insurance policy they have. By the way, there is also an article this morning in USA TODAY entitled ''Doctors limit new Medicare patients,'' which was also predicted by some of us.

One thing my friends on the other side of the aisle might have forgotten is we cannot force doctors—they have not enacted a law yet that forces doctors to see Medicare patients. Therefore, a number of doctors are voting with their fee in the respect that they are not enrolling new Medicare patients they would treat.

I ask my colleague, Dr. BARRASSO, if he would comment on the doc fix and also maybe a better explanation than I have been able to give as to why so many people face the loss of their health insurance policy between now and 2013.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, my colleague from Arizona is absolutely right. There is a front-page story in USA TODAY. I was reading it as I was coming back from Wyoming yesterday. In Wyoming over the weekend, I visited with a number of seniors on Medicare. I visited with some family physicians who take care of families in Wyoming. I practiced medicine for 25 years in Wyoming taking care of families and have lived under the Medicare rules and regulations.

Here it is: ''Doctors limit new Medicare patients. Surveys point to payment concerns.'' Doctors will tell you the biggest deadbeat when it comes to paying for health care is the Federal Government. It is Washington. More and more of my colleagues are opting out, as the Senator from Arizona said, from taking care of Medicare patients because what they get reimbursed is so limited that it does not keep up with the growing cost of liability insurance, the mandates on them in terms of the expenses of running a business, and they try to provide health care for all their employees.

Item after item, those costs go up. But what the government continues to pay for taking care of patients on Medicare, which is an expanding group of people, is shrinking.

Think about how Washington works and does not get it. Patients around the country on Medicare understand they are having a hard time finding a doctor. The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services was quoted in yesterday's USA TODAY saying 97 percent of doctors accept Medicare. What is the reality? In North Carolina, since January 1, this article says 117 doctors have opted out of Medicare. In New York, since the beginning of the year, about 1,100 doctors have left Medicare. The president of the State of New York Medical Society is not taking new Medicare patients.

Mr. MCCAIN. As well as the Mayo Clinic.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mayo Clinic said: We cannot afford to keep our doors open if we are taking Medicare patients. Specifically in Arizona, where they have a wonderful clinic, the best care in the world in many ways in the sense that early on in the health care debate, President Obama said we should use the Mayo Clinic as a model of what works, they do not want to take Medicare patients. They do not want to take Medicaid patients. But this health care law is cramming 16 million more Americans on to Medicaid. What the President is proposing for the American people is something less than what he has previously said is the best in care.

One of the other promises the President made is, if you like the health care you have, you can keep it. As a matter of fact, he gave a speech about a year ago at the American Medical Association meeting:

> If you like your health care plan, you will be able to keep your health care plan. Period.

He went on to say:

> No one will take it away. Period. No matter what. Period.

Now the White House has come out with new rules and regulations about