

Mr. REID. I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Ms. CANTWELL. I ask consent to speak as if in morning business.

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

CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES IMPROVEMENT AND INNOVATION ACT

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I know my colleagues here want to join in on the debate that just transpired, but I wanted to take a minute to talk about Senate bill 1542, which passed last night. I know, just as people are frustrated here with everything that is going on, I think it is important to stop for a second, when something does pass and it is good policy, that we talk about it, and that is the Child and Family Services Improvement and Innovation Act.

Congress took a pretty big step last night by improving the lives of children by the passage of this legislation. It is about keeping families together. It is about rewarding government efficiency and driving down costs, and it is about giving flexibility to invest in programs that are proven to work for kids and families.

This bill is about America's children. It is about making sure that America's foster care program works for children so they can keep their families together. Too often, our Federal policies have punished States which have innovative programs, giving States money based on how many kids were still in foster care instead of rewarding success and innovation that helped transition children out of the foster care system and back with their families.

Let me tell you what has happened in Washington State. We have been implementing innovative programs to improve foster care for many years now. When Washington State noticed a disproportionate number of Native-American children being placed in foster care, our advocates took action and implemented the Washington Indian Child Welfare Act in developing strategies for strengthening tribal relationships and promoting the best interests of Native-American children.

When Washington State noticed in general how long children were staying in foster care, advocates took action, this time implementing policies to help reduce the length of stay for children in out-of-home care. As a result, the median length of stay for children in out-of-home care declined almost 100 days between 2009 and 2011. In addition,

Washington State reduced its foster care caseloads by 13.8 percent during a similar time period.

Unfortunately, instead of being rewarded for these actions, we were penalized, and that is what this legislation has helped to correct. In fact, we lost \$2.7 million during that time period. So this legislation, instead of punishing Washington State for keeping kids out of foster care, helps us ensure the kind of innovation that will help us to make sure the best programs are implemented. This allows Washington to increase its capacity to keep doing the things that keep children who have been in the foster care system from being in the foster care system the entirety of their childhood. This instead drives them, hopefully, successfully back with their families.

Our State can invest in evidence-based programs that have proven to work, and just as this legislation will help us to do, it will make sure that children don't bounce from foster home to foster home on a continuing basis. We will help to keep kids out of the care system and, when possible, place them back safely with families.

Washington State Representative Ruth Kagi, who has been a tireless advocate for this system, said it best:

Title IV-E waivers can help the State move from purchasing specific services to purchasing specific outcomes.

I thank Chairman BAUCUS and Ranking Member HATCH for their timely and innovative work on this legislation. I wish my colleagues could have been at the hearing that was held earlier this year when Senator BAUCUS asked young adults, who had been part of the foster system for their entire lives, how to change the system.

I thank the chairman for taking into consideration the specific improvements and innovations that Washington State has advocated. And I thank my colleague, Representative JIM MCDERMOTT, and the Washington State legislators who worked on this, including Partners for Our Children, the Children's Home Society of Washington, and the various social workers and advocates who, in our State, continue to try to innovate when it comes to foster care in America.

This legislation is a major step forward to promote innovation on a Federal basis and to help keep families together. In doing so, we will have the benefit of also driving more efficiency and driving down the cost. But, more importantly, we are going to be working to strengthen America's children and families by trying effectively to keep them together.

I thank the President, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

AMERICAN JOBS

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I want to speak for a few moments about what has been happening all week here

in the Senate and in the House of Representatives.

First of all, this year we have seen a terrible string of natural disasters that have shut down businesses and left families homeless across America. As chair of the Agriculture Committee, I am certainly very concerned about the flooding along the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers, and the record droughts that have devastated the livelihoods of men and women who grow our food across America.

In response to that, the Senate, on a strong bipartisan basis, responded to provide the funding for FEMA to help with communities across America, 48 States, to be able to respond and be able to do what we always do as Americans—to be able to step forward and work together and meet these kinds of natural disasters and the help that is needed.

We sent that to the House. The House decided, on the other hand, that they not only would lower the funding amount, even though we know that means multiple times now having to keep churning to work something out, but they have cut the amount. Then they added to it an effort to cut in half a public-private sector effort that is creating jobs.

I know people in Michigan and people across the country would be scratching their heads, saying, Wait a minute. Did I hear this right? We are stepping forward to help families who had their house wiped out or their business wiped out or their farm wiped out or some other horrendous challenge because of natural disasters. In order to help them, the House Republicans are saying we have to cut jobs. That makes absolutely no sense.

I would say that while Michigan was very fortunate that we were not one of the 48 States that has lost, because of weather disasters, homes or businesses or jobs or families, we have had a different kind of disaster that has been going on. It is an economic disaster, it is a jobs disaster.

I find it appalling that, on the one hand, we see strong support on the other side of the aisle to rebuild homes and businesses and roads and schools in Iraq and Afghanistan. We are not saying there, well, gosh, we need to take away an effort to fund jobs or education here at home to be able to fund what we are doing in Iraq and Afghanistan. But when it comes to helping people in America, somehow we can't work together and get that done without having to pit one State which has a jobs crisis against another State which has a flood or a hurricane or a drought. I don't find that to be very American.

I think it is time to stop playing politics. When hundreds of thousands of families and businesses have been devastated by unprecedented strings of floods, tornadoes, hurricanes, wildfires, and other natural disasters, we ought to be stepping up, doing what we did in the Senate and passing a bipartisan bill to help those families, those businesses, those farms, without playing

politics and trying to hurt other States that have been hit by other kinds of economic disasters.

We have 14 million people out of work in this country, and that doesn't count people working part time two jobs, three jobs, or trying to piece it all together in some way. We know it is much higher than that when you count those individuals and families. For each and every one of them, their job search is an emergency. It is an emergency every time they think about how to put food on the table for their family. It is an emergency every month when they have to scrape together the money they need for rent or to pay the mortgage. It is an emergency every time these men and women are filling out applications, every day going to job fairs, going on the Internet, trying to fill out forms, getting in lines, to find the best way to be able to get back to work. It is an emergency.

So, to me, it is outrageous that the House of Representatives—the Republicans in the House—has included a job-killing offset to what is an important disaster assistance bill, to pull the rug out from businesses across the country and put up to 50,000 American jobs at risk.

Let me tell you about what this particular program is. I am proud to have championed this and initiated it in the Energy bill back in 2007, a bipartisan bill signed by President Bush. It was slow to get going initially to get the funding. I am proud that President Obama embraced it and moved forward to be able to put in place an alternative vehicle manufacturing loan program to help retool plants in America so we wouldn't be losing the production of new, small plug-in electric vehicles and other new technology vehicles to other countries. It is a loan program to retool plants in America, and it is working.

In Michigan, these retooling loans made it possible for Ford Motor Company to save 1,900 jobs at their Michigan assembly plant in Wayne, MI, so they could build the all-new Ford Focus electric and the battery-electric Focus in America. In the process of that, between the retooling loans and our partnership with industry to invest in advanced battery technology, we are now bringing jobs back from Mexico.

How many times have I heard colleagues on the floor talking about how we want to make sure we are exporting products, not jobs, and that we want to bring jobs back? What the House Republicans have done is to cut in half an initiative with the private sector that is actually bringing jobs back from other countries. So far, 41,000 jobs have been saved or created through this effort around the country. Obviously, I care deeply about Michigan and have fought for this, but we are talking about Indiana, Illinois; we are talking about Florida and Louisiana and California, and all across our country where we are seeing communities have the opportunity to retool plants that

would be idle, empty, an eyesore, and be able to bring those back with new technologies that are going to get us off of foreign oil and are creating jobs—41,000 jobs so far.

The real insult to me, as I look at what is happening to people in my State and across the country, is that they are poised to be giving out up to 11 additional loans to partner with business in the next couple of months that will create somewhere between 40,000 and 50,000 new jobs, saving or creating new jobs in the next few weeks. And right when this is about to happen, the House Republicans are saying: Oh, no, in order to help the folks in Joplin, MO, who are wiped out as a community, we want to make sure we are not creating jobs in Michigan; that we are not creating jobs in Indiana, Ohio, Illinois, Florida, Louisiana, California, Minnesota, wherever it is; that somehow we have to pit Americans against each other. That is not the America I know and love.

In Michigan we don't have a weather emergency. But we stand with every single State on this floor, every single Member who has had one. We stand as Americans together to support people across this country. But we say, Stop, when that means that somehow an effort to make things in America, manufacturing, the backbone of our economy, is somehow attacked one more time and partnerships taken away in order to make that happen.

It makes absolutely no sense. That is what this debate is about. I wish to share some comments because we received a lot of support. I wish to share a couple comments, if I might, on the floor.

The National Association of Manufacturers has sent a letter opposing the defunding of this particular partnership and they say: "Defunding the Advanced Technology Vehicle Manufacturing Loan Program will hurt manufacturers and their employees."

Everybody is spending a whole lot of time talking about jobs around here. Unbelievably, we are talking about defunding this program in the middle of talking about jobs, how we need to create jobs, how we need to support employers, and how we can compete internationally with countries such as China that say: Come on over. We will build the plant for you. Forget a loan you are going to pay back with interest; we will just build it for you. Come on over, and, by the way, we will steal your patents and manipulate our currency and make sure you get the toughest deal possible to compete with us. But that is what they do.

So we put together something to say we are going to partner with the private sector to be able to keep the jobs in America and it is actually working. Jobs are coming back. We are rebuilding communities. We are rebuilding plants. We are helping to get off foreign oil because we are focused on new electric vehicles and an advanced battery technology industry where, be-

cause of our efforts, from producing 2 percent of the world's batteries, we are on our way to producing 40 percent, having the capacity to manufacture and create 40 percent of the world's batteries within the next 3 years. Why? Because we have been working together in partnerships with industry, which is what our industry is competing against around the world.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce said: "The ATVM loan program . . . promotes manufacturing in the U.S. and is an important component of America's energy security."

We all want to get off foreign oil. We do not want to be buying oil from folks we do not like and they don't like us and we can't trust them. We have an opportunity, through the efforts we are focused on around alternative vehicles and battery initiatives, to get off foreign oil.

This makes absolutely no sense to me. We have multiple other letters—the Alliance for Automobile Manufacturers, the Blue/Green Alliance—we have others who have come back and shared that as well.

We are at a moment when we know we need to pass a continuing resolution on the regular budget. We have a new process for a supercommittee to look at how we take on and tackle the issues around our national debt and economic growth. During the process that set that up, there was an agreement on the budget numbers. We have the ability to pass that now. We have passed a bill to help our citizens across the country who have had weather disasters, natural disasters. We came together in the Senate to do that. The House has that.

There is one thing standing in the way: whether at this time we are going to say to people in Michigan and in other States where the economic disaster has been overwhelming that we are going to pit their need for jobs against somebody else's need to have their home or their street or their school rebuilt.

That is not who we are in America. I do not believe Americans support that strategy. I think it is outrageous that there is a proposal that passed. I thank my House Democratic colleagues and my House colleagues in Michigan and the Democratic leadership in the House for waging a fierce battle to protect those jobs.

This is about making products in America. It is about rejuvenating an advanced manufacturing sector that is critical. We are not going to have a middle class if we do not make products in America. We are not going to have a middle class. This particular partnership, which is nothing more than a loan, repaid with interest, but it is support for our communities to rebuild—rebuild not in Afghanistan, not in Iraq but in America; rebuild communities and create jobs. It is working. It is beginning to bring jobs back. It is outrageous that they have decided to take half the funding for this partnership away.

I wish to support our effort to send over the continuing resolution on the budget we need. I thank my caucus and our leadership for standing firm and standing up for American jobs. That is what we care about. That is what we have been fighting for. Along the way, we are going to make sure we are doing everything we can to help citizens who have been so devastated by the natural disasters across the country.

I suggest the absence of quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I come to the floor and will spend the next 15 minutes or so, maybe even longer, to support the arguments made just recently, and I might say eloquently and passionately, by the Senator from Michigan, who was one of the key architects of this very successful job creation program that the Republican House leadership is trying to kill. That is, in large measure, what this debate this weekend and through next week is about. That is why almost unanimously Democrats in the Senate are supporting our Democratic caucus in the House as we try to bring this debate forward so the American people can understand at this time and hopefully give their voice of support for what we are trying to do—keep government operating and keep jobs being created in this country.

It is a struggle. We know we are not creating as many as we would like. But one of the programs that is creating thousands of jobs and has broad support in America—and I am going to read the groups supporting it in just a minute. For some reason, the Republican leader in the House, ERIC CANTOR, decided last week—even as the winds were affecting his district and Hurricane Irene was challenging the east coast, a portion of the country he represents—he decided we needed to find an offset so we could send money to his district and to other districts across the country and picked this program.

They couldn't have picked a worse one because this program is actually working. It has already demonstrated it has revitalized communities.

In addition, it is a program that created jobs, so several dozen Republican House Members have sent private letters to the Secretary of Energy asking for the money to go back to their districts, but publicly they want to gut the program. Democrats have decided to bring this to the attention of the American public. I have those letters, and I am going to submit them for the RECORD.

How is it that dozens of Republican leaders wrote private letters—which are a public record—but they do not issue them to the press. They sent

them to the Secretary. Anyone can get copies of them. I did this morning and I have them. They are private letters to the Secretary, asking for this program to loan money to a public-private partnership to create jobs in their district. Then they go home and they talk about their efforts to create jobs and they come back to Washington and try to gut the program under the guise that they need the money to help disaster victims. That is what this debate is about. That is why the Democrats are not—at least at this point, and I hope over the weekend and through next week—going to give in to that nonsense and hypocrisy.

I hope the President and the White House will fight hard, along with the Democrats. I hope some of the Republicans who have signed these letters will think twice when this vote comes up again. I hope the press is reading these letters and asking these Republicans, whose signatures are on these letters, one question: How is it possible that they sent a letter to the Secretary asking for a loan to support job creation in their district and then, at the same time, stand on the Senate floor and vote to gut the same program and then go back home and claim they are helping to create jobs in America?

I am going to start with the first letter, which is the most interesting to me. It is from Dr. DARRELL ISSA. He is a Member of Congress. He actually chairs an oversight committee. I think his district is in California. He is a Republican from California. He is a very powerful Member of the House. I am going to read his whole letter.

I write to express my support for Aptera Motors' application for a loan under the Department of Energy's 136 Advanced Technology Vehicles Manufacturing Incentive Program. Otherwise known as the ATVMIP.

The program he voted last night to eliminate. The same one.

Funding will allow Aptera to establish U.S. manufacturing facilities for the commercial production of its plug-in and hybrid electric cars. Aptera Motors plans to purchase and equip manufacturing facilities to begin commercial-scale production of its energy electric vehicles. Awarding this opportunity to Aptera Motors will greatly assist a leading developer of electric vehicles in my district.

Electric vehicle initiatives, like Aptera's, will aid U.S. long-term energy goals by shifting away from fossil fuels and using viable renewable energy sources like plug-in electric energy. Additionally, Aptera's vehicles will reduce dependence on foreign oil and enhance energy security. Aptera's project will also promote domestic job creation through California as well as in other States.

Unlike many other electric vehicles, Aptera's energy efficient electric vehicles have a range of over 100 miles per charge and the possibility to become one of the most energy efficient vehicles in the world. A loan to Aptera will help accelerate the move from gasoline-powered vehicles to cleaner electric vehicles.

I urge you to give Aptera's Advanced Technology Vehicles Manufacturing Incentive Program funding application full consideration.

If I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me—

or amazingly—
my press assistant.

Normally, when I write these letters, I say if I can be of further assistance, please contact me and my energy assistant. The energy leg person usually handles this. But in this case he said we should call his press secretary. I guess the press secretary could go back to his district and claim he is doing a great job creating programs in California.

Maybe the press actually writes that DARRYL ISSA, Republican leader, is promoting manufacturing in California. This is what he says in his district, and this is the letter he sends to the Secretary. However, when he was on the floor of the House last night, he voted to gut this program. That is what this debate is about. I am looking forward to having it.

The next letter I am going to read—and I am going to do this all week, so I hope the press gets ready to ask these Republican leaders how they could possibly have the gall to hold press opportunities in their districts promising people they are helping them create jobs and then come back to Washington and cut the rug out from underneath their feet with the bogus excuse that they have to come up with \$1 billion, when the real need is only \$175 million. I checked with Craig Fugate, a very good friend of mine. I am the chair of his committee. I talk to him all the time. When the real need for FEMA in 2011 is \$175 million, but under the guise of having to provide \$1 billion, they want to gut this program that is creating jobs, and they themselves have asked for these loans to be made in their district.

This is the next letter signed by several Members, and I am going to submit their names for the RECORD. There are several Republicans. I am sorry, but from this letter I am not able to determine which ones are Republicans and which ones are Democrats.

I ask unanimous consent that these letters be printed in the RECORD at the conclusion of my remarks.

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

(See exhibit 1)

Ms. LANDRIEU. Thank you. This is to Secretary Chu.

The State of California has traditionally assumed a leading role in fighting global warming and working to eliminate our dependence on foreign sources of oil. We want to commend you for also taking effective steps towards achieving these goals. As part of this effort, the Department of Energy's Electric Drive and Vehicle Battery and Component Manufacturing Initiative is currently reviewing submissions for the construction of new lithium ion battery facilities in the United States. This initiative is a huge step forward in our efforts to improve our environment, eliminate our dependence on foreign sources of oil, and create a modern green-collar workforce here in the United States.

Quallion, an innovative American company located in California, can be a valuable partner in your efforts because it is ready today to directly support President Obama's

goal to have one million plug-in hybrid cars on the road by 2015. Quallion is a world leader in the development of customized lithium ion batteries for medical, military, aerospace and vehicle applications. If Quallion is successful in its bid for grants through the Department of Energy's Electric Drive and Vehicle Battery Component Manufacturing Initiative, it is set to immediately execute the construction of state-of-the-art manufacturing facilities to produce—

Et cetera, et cetera, et cetera.

Quallion projects that with this grant funding the proposed facility could be fully operational by 2011, and could produce more than 20,000 lithium ion batteries each year.

This is the killer.

In addition, Quallion projects this funding will create more than 2,300 new and long-term jobs nationwide.

This is the program that Representative CANTOR decided to use as an offset so he could fool the American people into believing we need to find an offset to offset \$1 billion of expenses, when we only have \$175 million in expenses.

So they write the letters privately to the Secretary asking for funding to go with their districts to create jobs and then they come to Washington and they gut the program for no reason.

This is another letter, and it is a little close to home. This is a letter I wrote. I was joined by my colleague Senator VITTER, Republican from Louisiana, and my Republican counterpart RODNEY ALEXANDER, who represents the district in my State. We sent this letter on December 21.

We are writing to reiterate our strong support for Next Autoworks Company's loan application under the Department of Energy's Advanced Technology Vehicle Manufacturing Program and inquire about the status of the application.

Next Autoworks resubmitted a revised application in May 2010 that was almost immediately declared substantially complete and expeditiously reviewed for technical and financial merit. We appreciate the Department's work to move the application through several critical stage-gates over the past several months.

Next Autoworks has the ability to transform communities in Louisiana by bringing critical economic growth in jobs to our state and region. As you know, the company plans to re-equip a former Guide Corp Plant in Monroe, LA, that was shuttered in 2006 and establish a production facility that would bring approximately 1,400 direct jobs and an additional 1,800 indirect jobs to Northeast Louisiana. In addition, the project will create thousands of jobs at supply facilities across the U.S. The State of Louisiana and local communities have already demonstrated their commitment by offering this company \$82 million in grants, \$128 million in employee training services, and an estimated \$33.8 million in tax abatements to support the project.

This is how strongly our Republican Governor and Republican legislature in Louisiana feel about this project, that we have put up State and local money to see if we could attract this loan from the Federal Government to get this going.

It is signed by my colleague Senator VITTER and signed by my friend and colleague Representative ALEXANDER, who represents this district. This is

one of our No. 1 economic development projects in the State of Louisiana, and what did the Representative do last night? He voted to gut the program.

I have dozens of other letters, but I am going to pause because I think I have made my point. I am going to read every one of these letters that I have between now and when this debate ends. I just pray the press will do their job and ask the Members who voted and sent these letters why did they send a letter to the Secretary asking for the program and then turn around and gut the program when they came to Washington.

I would like to ask for 5 minutes more.

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

Ms. LANDRIEU. The other point is this: This is not just an issue for one State or two States. That is why Democrats believe strongly about this because this is about the whole country. The President has declared disasters this year in 48 of the 50 States. Maybe if we just had had disasters in one or two places and they were not that terrible, we would figure out some way. The problem is we have disasters in all States, and I am going to show what these pictures portray because they are heartwrenching.

This is New Jersey. This is someone's household belongings. This is a home that is completely uninhabitable. I am not sure how high the water is, but this is what a home looks like after a flood. I can visualize what it looked like after Katrina and smell, even more than the vision.

This is what New Jersey looked like a couple weeks ago. This water has gone down, but this is Bound Brook, NJ. We do not know much about this town. We hear about Trenton. We hear about New York. I have never been to Bound Brook, NJ, but I am sure it is a lovely place and it needs our help.

So what does Representative CANTOR do? He comes to Washington, he looks at places such as this, and he decides out of the blue sky that he is now going to assert his power by demanding an offset for disaster funding when it is not necessary. The offset is way more than what is required. Again, it is an offset that is creating jobs in America.

I wish to say something else about the danger of requiring offsets and respond directly to what minority leader MITCH MCCONNELL said earlier today. I think he said something akin to the reason we want to require offsets is because we have to stop doing things the same way around here, and just because we have never required them in the past, that is no reason to not require them now. I understand that. I am kind of a person who likes to do things differently. I like to change things.

I wish to remind the leader that not one Republican, to my mind, either in the Senate or the House, ever asked for 5 minutes to debate \$1 to offset war or rebuilding in Iraq and Afghanistan. I wish to put up this chart.

This is from 2001, so this is a chart that shows—let's say the last year. I think it is important for the public to understand not just today but 10 years.

If we were to chart, which we have done here, a lot of this supplemental spending, emergency spending and disaster spending—these are not for just natural disasters, these are for emergencies. For example, when we went to war in Iraq, it was an emergency. When we went to war in Afghanistan, it was an emergency. When we had the avian flu, that was an emergency, not a disaster. So this is disasters and emergencies.

Let's take this red bar here. It says Iraq and Afghanistan, \$79 billion. Do my colleagues see this zero here? That is zero offset. So \$79 billion and no offset. This one is war money.

This is tsunami money that we actually sent to—remember we had the tsunami in Indonesia, and we sent some money over there. Did ERIC CANTOR come to the floor and say we need to offset the money? No. So we sent that money, and less than 2 percent of it was offset.

Here is Iraq and Afghanistan, and none of it was offset—\$87.6 billion.

So I think disaster victims in his own district and around the country are saying: So why are we now in this debate trying to find an offset we really don't need for a program that really works? That is a good question. If we want to find an offset, we should find another program. The only offset required is \$175 million, but that makes too much sense.

So I want the Republican leadership to know they are risking a very important debate. I don't believe we should even talk about shutting the government down. People are tired of that. We just went through a challenge to the whole economy with the debt ceiling limit. Enough is enough. Democrats should not, in my view, cave on this point. We should fight and get them to compromise which is reasonable.

In addition to these arguments, I will put up a chart that is hard to look at, but I think for the gulf coast Republicans and Republican Senators, it is a very important chart.

One of the dangers of requiring an offset is, No. 1, like right now, it is virtually impossible to get 535 Members to all agree on an offset. So what happens is, if we demand to have one, we keep the victims waiting while we debate. It also doesn't help to choose an offset that is very popular on one side. There might be a program that we could over the next couple of months decide is unnecessary, but we can't do that within a few days of the disaster. It takes time. They should know that.

Let me explain what this is for the gulf coast Senators. I had this done after Katrina just to show the vulnerability of the gulf coast. All of these red lines that look like spaghetti and then these bigger lines—the blue and the yellow and the orange—these are all

hurricanes that have actually hit the United States between 1851 and 2008. It is a very frightening chart.

One of the reasons I think Senator RUBIO from Florida is voting with us is because he has seen a picture of this chart. That is how many hurricanes have hit Florida since 1851. He is most certainly aware from his State that if he takes the position that we have to require an offset to fund disasters, his job as a Senator will be very, very difficult, even more challenging than it is today, because the next time a hurricane hits Florida, he is going to have to go sit down with the budget folks and find out—before he can offer his people the \$2,000 in emergency aid, the \$30,000 that helps them, the loans through the Small Business Committee, the loans to get their businesses back—he is going to have to come up here and negotiate to find an offset.

Last night, I watched the debate on the House side. I thought our Democratic colleagues did a beautiful job, and I wish to thank them for the beautiful way they spoke. I didn't see one Republican come to the floor. They had just one of their leaders talking last night when the vote happened. Maybe they are a little embarrassed, and they should be because I am going to read the letters they sent.

Also, the gulf coast Republicans I think really have to think about this because these storms, as we can see—my State and the people I represent are in Hurricane Alley. This is Hurricane Rita, the blue, which is one of the most devastating storms. That is why it is a thicker line. Hurricane Gustav is the orange, Hurricane Ike is the dark pink, and Hurricane Katrina is the yellow. All of these storms hit us and wrecked the gulf coast.

Let me say what happened after that. Haley Barbour, the Governor of Mississippi, who is still the Governor of Mississippi, came up here when George Bush was the President and got \$4.6 billion without one penny of offset, and he got that within 60 days of the storm. I am going to repeat that. Governor Haley Barbour, who is still the Governor of Mississippi, came to Washington, met with the President, and left with \$4.6 billion to rebuild Mississippi. The Congress gave Louisiana \$5.4 billion, for which I was very grateful. However, we had 70 percent of the damage but only got 55 percent of the money, so we were shortchanged. I had to work for years. I finally got that squared away.

But this is why gulf coast Republicans and Republican Senators from the gulf coast should think not twice but three times before they vote to require an offset.

I am just saying I am not going to forget this vote, because I chair this committee, and if my colleagues vote to require an offset and another storm hits their State, then the responsibility is on their shoulders to tell their people: I am sorry, I can't help you

until I go to Washington and find an offset.

Maybe it will get so ridiculous—and I am going to call this the Cantor doctrine—maybe it will get so ridiculous that ERIC CANTOR will tell all the people in America—there was a cartoon in the newspapers about this. I am having it blown up because it is really sad, but it is actually funny. There is a woman sitting on top of her roof because her house is completely flooded. She has a phone, and she calls FEMA and FEMA says: We can't rescue you right now. We are looking for an offset.

So maybe the new Cantor Republican model of "pick yourself up by your bootstraps and swim away on your own" will actually really be put into practice because I think that is what they want because before that woman can be rescued, before the debris can be removed, that woman is going to have to sit down at the table with her husband and kids in a broken-down house or trailer and suggest some offsets to send to their Congressman before we can send them help. That is not right. That is what this debate is about.

Now, do we eventually have to pay for these disasters? Absolutely.

The Wall Street Journal editorialized against me the other day, so let me answer them. They said: There goes Senator LANDRIEU; she doesn't think she has to pay for anything. That is not true. I believe right now we are paying for the war in Iraq, and it is very tough to pay for that. We are finding a way in the supercommittee. But we didn't have to find an offset before we could let our troops march in. We didn't have them standing on the border, saying: Stand right here. Hold your fire. ERIC CANTOR is working on an offset for you. We sent the troops in, we let the bombers go, and we will figure out how to pay for it later.

So I am telling the Republicans in the House that they better think very carefully about this vote. Senator REID has sent a very good compromise. He said: We will give up our number, we will take your number on FEMA, but we are not going to take this offset.

Now, I still think and I want to say for the record, as the chairman of this committee, that 3.65 is not going to be enough to get us through all of next year, but it will get us through the next couple of weeks and months—not months, maybe weeks. The government won't shut down, and FEMA will have money to operate, as the leader said. It is not ideal. It is not what is in our bill, which is the best, which is a \$6.5 billion level, which is funding not just FEMA, but it will fund the Corps of Engineers, community development, agriculture. What the House is doing only funds FEMA. It doesn't give any money to the poor. It doesn't give any money to community development. It doesn't give any money to the farmers. So if you are sitting out there looking at your farm with your crops ruined, please don't think the House of Representatives is doing one thing to help you because they are not.

So I have given any number of reasons why this is an important debate to have. There is no guarantee Democrats will win, but every now and then it is a good thing to stand up for principle, and I believe this is a principle worth standing up for and worth fighting for.

I hope the press does their job over the next several days and asks these Republicans: How in the world can you send a private letter asking for funding and then come back to Washington and gut the same program? And if the press does their job and if the people in our country will ask those same questions, maybe a few of these Republican leaders will compromise the way they should. Either give up the offset or come up with a different one. Come up with another one that is much less harmful.

Let me end with this. We have three letters that I will submit for the RECORD. If people can't take my word for any of this, they can listen to the chamber of commerce. What did the chamber of commerce say? I will submit their letter. This is the wrong thing to do, the chamber says. Don't eliminate this program. It is creating jobs in America. So the Republicans, I know, don't really like to listen to what I say a lot, but they should listen to the chamber of commerce.

The National Manufacturing Association—a very conservative group—sent the Republicans a letter saying: Bad deal. Don't do it. They did it anyway.

I just got a letter from the U.S. Conference of Mayors. All of the mayors in the country, Republicans and Democrats, sent a letter to the House saying: Don't do this. And they did it anyway.

So the only people more powerful and the only group more powerful than the chamber, than NAM, than the mayors, are the people themselves. So I hope this weekend the people will say to their representatives: Don't cut out a program that is creating jobs. Don't require disaster victims to have an offset. Let's keep the government operating, and let's find a way to pay for this over time together and get this deficit under control.

I am willing to do that. As the chair of this committee, I promise them we can do better budgeting in the future. Nobody did it really great in the past. I am willing to do that. I am willing to work with them in any way. But let's not go down this dangerous and inappropriate road.

EXHIBIT 1

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 14, 2009.

Hon. STEVEN CHU,
Secretary of Energy, U.S. Department of Energy, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SECRETARY: I write to express my support of Aptera Motors' application for a loan under the Department of Energy's 136 Advanced Technology Vehicles Manufacturing Incentive Program (ATVMIP). Funding will allow Aptera to establish U.S. manufacturing facilities for the commercial production of its plug-in and hybrid electric cars. Aptera Motors plans to purchase and

equip manufacturing facilities to begin commercial-scale production of its energy efficient electric vehicles. Awarding this opportunity to Aptera Motors will greatly assist a leading developer of electric vehicles in my district.

Electric vehicle initiatives like Aptera's will aid U.S. long-term energy goals by shifting away from fossil fuels and using viable renewable energy sources like plug-in electric energy. Additionally, Aptera's vehicles will reduce dependence on foreign oil and enhance energy security. Aptera's project will also promote domestic job creation throughout California as well as in other states.

Unlike many other electric vehicles, Aptera's energy efficient vehicles have a range of over 100 miles per charge and the possibility to become one of the most energy efficient vehicles in the world. A loan to Aptera will help accelerate the move from gasoline-powered vehicles to cleaner electric vehicles.

I urge you to give Aptera Motors' Advanced Technology Vehicles Manufacturing Incentive Program funding application full consideration. If I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me or my Press Assistant, Justin LoFranco at (202) 225-3906.

Respectfully,

DARRELL ISSA,
Member of Congress.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC.

Re Quallion application for Department of Energy's Electric Drive and Vehicle Battery and Component Manufacturing Initiative grant.

Secretary STEVEN CHU,
U.S. Department of Energy, Independence Ave.,
SW, Washington, DC.

DEAR SECRETARY CHU: The State of California has traditionally assumed a leading role in fighting global warming and working to eliminate our dependence on foreign sources of oil. We want to commend you for also taking effective steps towards achieving these goals. As part of this effort, the Department of Energy's Electric Drive and Vehicle Battery and Component Manufacturing Initiative is currently reviewing submissions for the construction of new lithium ion battery facilities in the United States. The Initiative is a huge step forward in our efforts to improve our environment, eliminate our dependence on foreign sources of oil and create a modern "green collar" workforce here in the United States.

Quallion, an innovative American company located in California, can be a valuable partner in your efforts because it is ready today to directly support President Obama's goal to have one million plug-in hybrid cars on the road by 2015. Quallion is a world leader in the development of customized lithium ion batteries for medical, military, aerospace and vehicle applications. If Quallion is successful in its bid for grants through the Department of Energy's Electric Drive and Vehicle Battery and Component Manufacturing Initiative, it is set to immediately execute the construction of a state-of-the-art manufacturing facility to produce advanced lithium ion cells, modules and battery technology in volumes that will meet America's current and future military and commercial needs. Quallion projects that with this grant funding the proposed facility could be fully operational by 2012, and could produce more than 20,000 lithium ion batteries each year.

In addition, Quallion projects that this funding will create more than 2,300 new and long-term jobs nationwide. It will also signal America's seriousness to the world that we

are ready to compete in the manufacturing of green technologies, in this case the lithium ion battery manufacturing space.

The lithium ion batteries manufactured in Quallion's new facility will have the potential to deliver real and immediate environmental solutions, while also creating new jobs at a time when Americans need them the most. The Environmental Protection Agency estimates that truck idling results in the emission of 11 million tons of CO₂ and the consumption of 960 million gallons of diesel fuel annually. Quallion's new facility will produce zero emission advanced lithium ion batteries designed to replace engine idling as a power source for stationary trucks. Quallion will deliver an immediate clean energy solution that enables the 1 million heavy trucks on our roads to comply with the growing number of anti-idling laws across the U.S., eliminate unnecessary pollution, and significantly reduce America's consumption of fossil fuels.

We believe that the Department of Energy's Electric Drive and Vehicle Battery and Component Manufacturing Initiative can and will play a large role in helping us achieve our goals. We are also confident that Quallion is a perfect partner in our objectives and will advance projects that are vital to our energy policy and national security.

Thank you for the leadership you have provided the Department and our country as we embark on an exciting era in our nation's stewardship of the environment and as we move towards our shared goal of energy independence.

Sincerely,

Brad Sherman, Dana Rohrabacher, Lynn C. Woolsey, Howard L. Berman, Lois Capps, Brian P. Bilbray, Diane E. Watson, Gary G. Miller, Jim Costa, Kevin McCarthy, Howard P. "Buck" McKeon, Ken Calvert, Duncan Hunter, Darrell E. Issa, David Dreier, Jerry McNeerney, Adam B. Schiff.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, DC, December 21, 2010.

Hon. STEVEN CHU,
U.S. Department of Energy,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SECRETARY CHU: We are writing to reiterate our strong support for Next Autoworks Company's loan application under the Department of Energy's Advanced Technology Vehicle Manufacturing (ATVM) program and inquire about the status of the application.

Next Autoworks resubmitted a revised ATVM application in May 2010 that was almost immediately declared substantially complete and expeditiously reviewed for technical and financial merit. We appreciate the Department's work to move the application through several critical stage-gates over the past several months.

Next Autoworks has the ability to transform communities in Louisiana by bringing critical economic growth and jobs to our state and region. As you know, the company plans to re-equip a former Guide Corp plant in Monroe, LA that was shuttered in 2006 and establish a production facility that would bring approximately 1,400 direct jobs and an additional 1,800 indirect jobs to Northeast Louisiana. In addition, the project will create thousands of jobs at supplier facilities across the U.S. The State of Louisiana and local communities have already demonstrated their commitment to the project by offering the company \$82 million in grants, \$12.8 in employee training services, and an estimated \$33.8 million in tax abatements to support the project.

Every day that Next Autoworks' application is delayed is another day that workers cannot be hired to begin work at the Monroe

site and help mitigate our state's continued high unemployment rate. Moreover, continued delay in the financing for the project will also negatively impact the vehicle's launch timing and this Administration's goals for fuel economy. DOE's own environmental assessment of this project, issued in October 2010, states that Next Autoworks' vehicle will have a significant positive impact on fleet fuel economy and the environment by providing a high quality, affordable "green" car to the American market.

We strongly urge you to continue to expedite Next Autoworks' application. We would request an update on the status of the application and expected timeframe for moving forward before the end of the year.

Sincerely,

MARY LANDRIEU,
U.S. Senator.
DAVID VITTEB,
U.S. Senator.
RODNEY ALEXANDER,
Member of Congress.

Ms. LANDRIEU. I yield the floor.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, first of all, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to speak for no more than 5 minutes and that the Senator from West Virginia follow my presentation.

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

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, first of all, I want to thank the Senator from Louisiana. I also want to point out, look at all those red lines. Those are the paths of hurricanes. Where do you think most of them were going between 1851 and 2008? And why are folks like us on the gulf coast and the Atlantic coast so sensitive about disaster money? It is because we have been hit over and over.

Our lands we call paradise. But they happen to be, as the Senator from Louisiana said, in the middle of "hurricane highway." It is a part of our lifestyle. When I was a kid, it was an excuse to get out of school. When I was a bachelor, it was an excuse to have a party. But now that I have the privilege of representing one of those very large gulf coast States and Atlantic coast States, it is absolute, utter destruction.

When Hurricane Andrew hit Miami, had it turned one degree to the north, and instead drawn a bead on the Dade-Broward line in north Miami, it would have been a \$50 billion insurance loss storm in 1992 dollars. That would have been upward of \$80 billion today. It would have taken down every insurance company that was doing business in the path of that storm. This is the destructive power. Do our people need help? Of course they need help.

BOB LEVINSON

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I came to speak on a different subject. A retired FBI agent named Bob Levinson, over 4 years ago, disappeared when he checked out of his hotel in the Iranian tourist attraction of Kish Island in the Persian Gulf. He disappeared. It is only recently that his family—and he leaves behind a family