

also one of the most expensive policies ever imposed on coal-fired plants. Under this rule, the EPA will require plants to install costly control technologies in exchange for minimal environmental gains.

The combined economic impact of the two regulations I have just mentioned is alarming. The Indiana Energy Association estimates that the cost of these rules will be between \$6.5 billion and \$7.3 billion just in my home State of Indiana. And when we add the entire eastern half of the country, from Mississippi River on to the Atlantic Ocean, that number goes up exponentially.

The National Economic Research Associates estimates employment losses of 1.4 million across the country as a result of the current EPA rules and deadlines. By 2016, NERA reports that American ratepayers will see an average increase of up to 23.5 percent—and in some places rates will be even higher.

Now, I want to say this: Cleaning our air is a worthy goal. Hundreds of billions of dollars have been spent under the Clean Air Act, which I supported in the 1980s and early 1990s because, as Americans, we all want to clean our air. Hundreds of billions of dollars have been spent by our utilities on clean air, consumers have been paying for it through our electricity bills to clean the air. The progress we have made has been astounding.

Provisions that were offered in a bill Senator JOE MANCHIN—a Democrat from West Virginia—and I offered together on a bipartisan basis do not turn back or unwind the progress we have made. They simply extend the compliance date for a 3-year period of time and coordinate that compliance date so that utilities can accomplish both of these goals laid out by the EPA in a reasonable time frame. This rule will take effect on January 1 of 2012. So we're asking for a little more time.

Earlier this year I voted to eliminate these rules. That vote, led by Senator RAND PAUL, was defeated. So we move now to the next stage which is to give utilities more time to meet EPA deadlines.

I urge the President to consider the Manchin-Coats legislation called the Fair Compliance Act, which is bipartisan legislation to delay the implementation of these harmful EPA rules. Otherwise, our utilities will not have the time needed to adequately prepare. The EPA will be shutting them down. Without extra compliance time, there are predictions of blackouts or rolling blackouts and substantial increases in utility rates at a time when the economy is struggling and our manufacturers need every competitive advantage they can get in order to compete around the world and get people back to work.

Having said that, let me just say one more thing. It is disappointing from my perspective in the lack of progress in addressing our dire fiscal situation. We've tried just about everything and

every process and every procedure people can think up, and each one of those has achieved either minimal results or failed completely. So after evaluating and looking at the extraordinary effort, energy and time put into the process this year, there have been very few results. It has become clear to me and reaffirmed something I believed from day one when I first got into politics—that unless we put in place a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution that will require Members to come down to this well and, before the President of the Senate, put their left hand on the Bible and their right hand in the air and swear to uphold a Constitution that incorporates a balanced budget requirement, we are never going to get there.

There is always a reason why something statutorily—all the efforts of the Gang of 6, the committee of 12; the rush to prevent crises by raising the debt limit; the cliff hangers: are we going to pass this or not, and are we going to extend the debt limit or not extend it—all the provisions through the appropriations process to cut spending and reduce government involvement and so forth have essentially failed.

What we need to do is what most States in this country do, what every business has to do, what every family has to do; that is, commit to balancing our budget, not spending more than we take in, and having a sworn, constitutional agreement that this is what we will do before we adjourn during every session. My State of Indiana has to do this, and many States across the country have to do this. They do because it produces transparency and honesty and Members going before their constituents and saying: That program is a great idea, but we can't afford it. Unless you're willing to support Congress raising your taxes or cuts in other places, we can't put that new program in place.

I think my time is running out. I ask unanimous consent for 2 more minutes, and I will wrap it up.

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

Mr. COATS. Thank you, Mr. President. I thank my colleagues.

If we don't have this ultimate enforcement mechanism, I fear we will just continue to do what we have been doing for years and years and years; that is, falling far short of where we need to go. I think where most of us know we need to make the tough decisions, to be honest with our constituents, to go forward and basically say this is what our sworn obligation is, and we are going to have to fulfill this obligation. Nothing else has succeeded in forcing this body to come together and in a bipartisan way—or even on a partisan basis—do what is necessary to get our fiscal house in order.

During this holiday season, the people who are without work and struggling to pay their mortgages or strug-

gling to save money so their kids can go to school, struggling to pay bills, wondering what the future is going to hold, those working two or three jobs, they are all out there saying we have to get this together, we have to get this country moving again. We cannot do that if we are plunging into debt or the policies coming out of this administration are denying our citizens the right to work in jobs that are available, such as the Keystone Pipeline. I can't even pay the utility cost now they say and if you are going to raise my rates 20 to 30 percent because of these regulations it is not going to be the kind of joyful, happy celebration at Christmas we would all wish for all our families across America.

With that, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CASEY. 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. CASEY. Mr. President, I have a number of consents I will offer.

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#### EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the period for morning business be extended until 5 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

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#### INSULAR AREAS ACT OF 2011

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. 2009, introduced earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2009) to improve the administration of programs in the insular areas, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I am pleased to be joined by my colleague from Alaska, and the ranking member of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, LISA MURKOWSKI, in urging passage of the Insular Areas Act of 2011. This legislation would enact three time-sensitive provisions needed to improve the operation of certain Federal programs in the U.S. territory of American Samoa and in the freely associated states of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, and the Republic of Palau.

First, section 2 of the bill would amend the Compact of Free Association Amendments Act of 2003 to direct the Secretary of Energy, as a part of