

number of States. They made their case as to why they should retain sole authority to regulate interstate pipelines. But it was an unpersuasive case. I encourage the Office of Pipeline Safety to consider my proposal to allow States which have at least 90 percent of a pipeline passing through their borders, to have greater authority in setting and implementing its own safety and inspection standards.

As Senator MURRAY and I await the administration's proposal, we agree that the following proposals must be included in the final legislation:

Allow States greater authority to adopt and enforce safety standards for interstate pipelines, particularly in light of the absence of meaningful federal standards.

This increase in authority should be accompanied by an increase in grants to States to carry out pipeline safety activities.

Improve the collection and dissemination of information about pipelines to the public and to local and State officials responsible for preventing and responding to pipeline accidents. This includes ensuring that operators are collecting the information necessary to accurately assess and respond to risks. The public should be informed about where pipelines are, what condition they are in, when they fail and why they fail.

Adopt more stringent national standards for pipeline testing, monitoring, and operation.

Ensure congressional mandates are followed, and make sure there are sufficient resources to enforce regulations.

Invest more in research and development to improve pipeline inspections.

Create a model oversight oil spill advisory panel in Washington State. This body would have the authority to not only respond, but to initiate the development of pipeline safety measures.

I have long believed that those closest to the problem are in a better position to help develop the solution. Families in Washington state, and across the country, have already paid to high a price for us to miss this opportunity to put higher federal safety standards into law.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, is the Senate currently in morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Yes.

OIL PRICES AND ENERGY POLICY

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I rise to talk this afternoon about this country's overall energy policy or, more truthfully, to talk about the lack of this country's overall energy policy.

With fuel prices continuing their rise to levels that threaten farmers, truckers, families, and, in fact, our entire economy, I felt I needed to come to the Senate floor for a few minutes to discuss this very important issue.

As my colleagues know, I come from a rural State that is heavily dependent on agriculture. When farmers in Minnesota are hurting, it has an impact on businesses, on families, and individuals far removed from the fields of our family farms. Because Minnesota is a large State and so heavily reliant upon agriculture, it is also reliant upon truckers to move products to market and to bring products to communities. It is also important to note that Minnesota is well known as one of our Nation's coldest States, a State where many residents rely on fuel oil to heat their homes. These realities are a few examples of why crude oil prices and supplies are so important to the people of my State. They are also examples of why, since coming to the Congress in 1993, I have been a strong critic of the Department of Energy's failure to strengthen our Nation's energy policies.

In the late 1970s, our Nation responded to the energy crisis by creating the Department of Energy and charging it with developing a stable energy policy that would decrease our reliance on foreign sources of energy. At the time, our Nation was reliant on foreign oil for about 35 percent of our needs. When DOE was created, with its charge to create an energy policy to make us more energy independent, our reliance on foreign fuels was 35 percent. Despite the countless billions of dollars taxpayers have invested in the Department of Energy over the past two decades, our Nation is now roughly 60 percent reliant on foreign energy sources, and that reliance is growing and growing rapidly.

That's one of the reasons why I'm an original cosponsor of S. Res. 263, which calls on both the administration and Congress to undertake steps which will lead to a long-term reduction of our reliance on foreign sources of energy. Among those steps, the resolution calls on the administration to review all programs, policies, and regulations that place an undue burden on domestic oil and gas producers. I believe this is an important aspect of the DOE's failure to reduce reliance on foreign energy sources. Sadly, this administration's opposition to virtually all exploration and production activities on public lands has rendered our nation's domestic producers incapable of responding to supply shortages. That is why we are in the position we are in today. In fact, since 1992, U.S. oil production has been reduced by 17% while our consumption of oil has increased by 14%. In 1990, U.S. jobs in oil and gas exploration and production were roughly 405,000—today those jobs have been reduced to roughly 290,000 a 27% decline in jobs in energy-related fields. In 1990, the United States was home to 657 working oil rigs. Today, there are only 153 working oil rigs scattered across the Nation—a decline of 77 percent; again, a reason the United States did not respond to shortages in supply. During a recent hearing before the Sen-

ate Budget Committee, I asked Energy Secretary Bill Richardson if he would consider supporting the exploration of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR), which is estimated to hold enough oil to offset 30 years of imports from Saudi Arabia. In his response, he indicated that he believes we have sufficient areas for exploration on federal lands without developing ANWR. We have opportunities, he says, to go onto other Federal lands and do the exploration. If we do, the question is, Why haven't we? If that is the case, then why has the Clinton administration failed to move forward in allowing expanded exploration and production activity on those Federal lands instead of leaving us vulnerable to the OPEC nations?

Why has this administration waited until an oil price crisis has gripped our nation before suggesting increased development of domestic oil and gas reserves on public lands? Why does this administration still maintain its opposition to exploring our nation's most promising oil reserves like ANWR? And why does this administration maintain opposition to exploration in the United States based on environmental considerations but has no reservations about calling on other nations to do so?

For some reason, this administration seems to believe that it is an environmentally friendly proposition to expect other nations to produce our oil for us. The United States has some of the most stringent environmental standards for oil exploration and production—standards that aren't embraced by many of the oil producing nations of the world. I simply cannot see how sending our nation's energy secretary across the world to beg for increased oil production every time we have a supply problem is sound energy, economic, or environmental policy. I do not connect the two.

I believe it's also important to note that this administration is currently engaged in a number of other activities that severely limit our nation's ability to increase our energy independence. First, this administration's failure to remove nuclear waste from civilian nuclear reactors threatens to shut down nuclear power plants across the country. In Minnesota, the DOE's inaction may force the premature closure of the Prairie Island Nuclear Generating Facility. If it should close, Minnesota will lose 20% of its generation capacity. At the same time, this administration is attempting to breach hydropower dams in the Pacific Northwest—dams that are crucial to the energy needs of that region. In each of these situations, consumers will be forced to rely more heavily upon fossil fuels to replace the loss of clean energy technologies. As if that weren't enough abuse of America's energy consumers, the Clinton administration has undertaken a number of activities that have severely impacted the ability of utilities to turn to coal-fired plants to meet the energy demands of consumers. And I need not remind any of my colleagues of the lack

of infrastructure in our nation to dramatically increase our use of natural gas as a reliable, base-load source capable of replacing hydropower, nuclear, and coal-fired generation.

What continues to amaze me is how this administration sends its "yes men" in front of Congress to pledge support for each of these generation technologies. I do not hear the administration telling Congress they want to eliminate coal-fired generation. But the EPA is doing its best to regulate coal plants out of business. I have never heard the administration say they want to close down nuclear plants, but I have yet to see them lift a finger to keep them operating. When anyone in this body confronts the administration with the impending brown outs and energy price increases its policies are going to force, all its representatives can say is that they're working on it and they support renewable energy technologies.

Well, I too, am a strong supporter of renewable energy technologies. I've been a strong proponent of the development and promotion of ethanol and biodiesel as a means of reducing our reliance on foreign oil and improving the environment. I was a cosponsor of legislation signed into law last year extending the tax credit for electricity generated from wind and expanding that tax credit to electricity generated from poultry waste. I have written letters in each of the past two years to Senate appropriators supporting significant increases in renewable energy programs, and I was one of 39 Senators to vote in support of a \$75 million increase for renewable energy programs last year. I wrote to President Clinton this year asking him to include more money for renewable energy programs in his budget. However, I know that simply calling for increased funding for renewable energy can't even approach the loss of generation in hydropower, nuclear, coal, and other sources that this administration has pursued through its energy policies.

I'd like to believe that this administration has a grasp on the long-term energy needs of our nation and has plans for meeting those needs, but the actions of the administration and the DOE's failures on the spectrum of energy challenges prove otherwise.

That's why, in a letter to Secretary Richardson last week, I urged him to take immediate actions to allow for both on and offshore oil and gas exportation and production in states that want to do so. I urged him to take immediate steps to ensure that nuclear power plants such as Minnesota's Prairie Island Facility are not forced to shut down due to DOE inaction. I urged him to work with the Department of Interior to resist attempts to reduce the use of hydropower. And I urged him and the administration to undertake an immediate review of all regulations that impose undue burdens on the development of domestic energy sources that could reduce our reliance on foreign oil.

Long ago, the Congress charged the U.S. Department of Energy with the job of reducing our nation's reliance on foreign oil and establishing a long-term, stable energy policy to guide our economy for decades to come. It goes without saying that the Department has failed miserably in that, its most basic mission.

I look forward to working with my colleagues in the coming days, weeks and months in enacting a number of both short-term and long-term responses to the needs of farmers, truckers, the elderly, and all energy consumers. I've been a strong supporter of renewable energy technologies and increased funding for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program—or LIHEAP. I strongly support the efforts of my colleagues to increase domestic oil and gas exploration and production on public lands, including offshore reserves and the tremendous potential of ANWR. I remain committed to finding a resolution to our nation's nuclear waste storage crisis—as crisis that threatens to shut down nuclear plants and further weaken our nation's domestic energy security. And I'll continue to be one of the Senate's strongest critics of the Department of Energy's unbelievable neglect of the long-term energy needs of our nation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. the Senator from Tennessee.

THE 17TH ANNIVERSARY OF PRESIDENT REAGAN'S STRATEGIC DEFENSE INITIATIVE

Mr. THOMPSON. Mr. President, seventeen years ago today President Reagan first committed his administration and the country to the concept of a National Missile Defense. He rightfully viewed the concept of Mutually Assured Destruction—the prevailing strategic concept of the day—as dangerous to this Nation. President Reagan understood that the only way to protect the American people and our homeland was through common sense, straight talk, and a strong, credible defense, not threats of mutual annihilation. While President Reagan and his Strategic Defense Initiative were mocked by critics, he remained steadfast in his vision and his belief that the American people could achieve anything they committed themselves to doing.

Seventeen years later the United States remains vulnerable to missile attack, but from newer and more likely threats, some of which we may not be able to deter: accidental launches, terrorist groups, and rogue states. The United States Intelligence Community and outside expert groups like the Rumsfeld Commission tell us that the threats are real and growing. Less than two years ago North Korea launched a three-stage missile over Japan, demonstrating a North Korean capability to send a missile with a nuclear, biological or chemical weapon to the United States. Meanwhile, other rogue

states like Iran, Iraq, and Libya are developing similar capabilities.

Despite these real dangers, the current administration has kept the American people vulnerable to attack by failing to vigorously pursue missile defense programs started by previous Republican administrations. It has put the fate of our country and our people in the hands of the 1972 ABM Treaty—a treaty signed with a country that no longer exists, which was written for a vastly different strategic environment, and which codified the concept of Mutual Assured Destruction.

It is imperative that the United States aggressively pursue Ronald Reagan's vision of an American homeland free and safe, protected from intimidation, blackmail, and attack by missile-armed adversaries. We can start by putting greater effort and resources into programs like the National Missile Defense program—which has already demonstrated through actual tests that missile defense is technologically feasible—a fact acknowledged privately by defense officials, and publicly by Secretary of Defense Bill Cohen following the most recent test when he stated that "the technology is certainly proving to be on the right track."

The United States should also continue to develop other initiatives which will complement our ground based system and provide for a multi-layered defense. I'm talking specifically about a sea-based system mounted on Navy Aegis cruisers that can be placed off an adversary's coast and destroy enemy missiles immediately after launch; or the Airborne Laser program that seeks to destroy missiles during their ascent; and a space-based system that can shoot down ballistic missiles in the outer atmosphere and vacuum of space.

I might also take this opportunity to compliment the Center for Security Policy and the Heritage Foundation that made valuable contributions in the discussion toward these alternatives.

The key to such a system is working with the Russians to allay their concerns, address their fears, and modify the ABM treaty to accommodate a robust, multi-layered national missile defense. We must try to convince the Russians that they share the threats we face—limited attacks or threats by rogue states—and that our missile defense plans in no way undercut their strategic deterrent. But ultimately, whether Russia is convinced or not, America must do what is necessary to protect itself.

I am concerned that the Clinton administration is currently negotiating changes to the ABM Treaty that will not allow us to fulfill these plans; that they are negotiating to make limited changes to the treaty that will sound good in an election year but will prevent us from building the robust, multi-tiered missile defense we need. This would be unsatisfactory and irresponsible. Marginal changes to the