

is 95 percent female, earn less money. That is not fair.

Waitresses' weekly earnings are \$50 less than waiters' earnings.

The situation is even worse for women of color. African American women earn only 67 cents and Latinos 56 cents for every dollar that men earn. This continues to be a disparity, and a lot of times when we look at our Nation and we look at the diversity that we have, all we are asking for is for equal pay for equal work; that African American women and Latinos should earn the same amount of dollars that anybody else should earn because they are willing to work and they are not asking for any special privileges. They are saying pay me for the same work that somebody else earns.

The wage gap impacts women's retirement also. Women have less to save for the future and will earn smaller pensions than men; and when we look at today's society, it is no longer a man that is providing but a woman a lot of times is providing for the family.

It is important that they also have that security for retirement when they are looking towards retirement.

On the job, working women are looking for higher pay, better benefits and, most of all, the three Rs, and I state the three Rs: respect, recognition, and reward for a job well done. We all need a pat on the back, and we all need to be respected when it comes to that recognition.

Half of all older women receiving a pension in 1998 got less than \$3,486 per year compared to \$7,020 per year for older men.

Before the end of the year, let us pass this legislation to finally make the work of America's women valued, fair, equitable, and just. Let us work to bring equal pay to every woman in America, to every working person. They deserve it. Their families deserve it. Let us get the job done.

PAY EQUITY DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Pay Equity Day and to focus attention on the need for pay equity.

Mr. Speaker, women across this country are speaking out on the importance of Pay Equity Day as data has shown that women must work almost 7 working days to earn what men earn in only 5 days. Appropriately, I am introducing legislation that will require Federal agencies to undertake studies that examine pay inequities and identify institutional barriers that can be lifted in order to diminish this disparity.

Women make up more than half of this Nation's workforce. Yet, 38 years after passage of the Equal Pay Act, women still receive about 76 cents to

each dollar paid to men. That means that women have to work 15 extra weeks in 2001 to earn what men earned in the year 2000.

For women of color, the gap is even wider. Black women earn 65 percent and Hispanic women 52 percent of white men's weekly earnings. The wage gap widens as women mature and has significant implications for life-long savings, Social Security, and retirement earnings. Thus, lower pay is not the only source of difficulty. A higher percentage of women than men work in service, nonunion jobs, and part-time jobs, where pensions are less likely to be offered.

Additionally, while women no longer routinely drop out of the labor force for child-bearing and child-rearing, more women than men leave work to care for children, elderly parents, or spouses. All of these factors take their toll.

In the private sector, only 31 percent of retired women age 65 or older have a pension, and the median benefit received by women who have pensions is only 38 percent of the median amount received by men. Financial worries are exacerbated by the fact that women tend to live longer than men so their retirement assets must spread over a longer period of time. Clearly, there is something seriously wrong when women age 65 and older are twice as likely to live in poverty as their male counterparts.

Today, there are nearly 6 million women business owners. They are the fastest growing segment of small business development in this Nation. Between 1987 and 1999, the National Foundation for Women Business Owners estimated that the number of women-owned firms increased by 82 percent nationwide. However, women still have less access to credit and are less likely to receive financing than men. This is a severe barrier to business growth, Mr. Speaker, and ultimately prosperity. We must recognize that when women thrive, our Nation prospers and families are strengthened.

Women comprise more than half the world's population. We account for the majority of new workers in both industrialized and developing countries. When women are guaranteed basic human and labor rights, whole families and communities benefit. When women gain knowledge, power, and equal resources to make their own choices, the chains of poverty will be broken.

□ 1945

This is how progress is generated. This is how lasting prosperity is built and measured.

Mr. Speaker, I will end with the words of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg who said, "Bias, both conscious and unconscious, reflecting traditional and unexamined patterns of thought, keeps up barriers that must come down if equal opportunity and nondiscrimination are ever genuinely to become this Nation's law and practice."

Fighting for pay equity and advancing the status of women is not just a social and moral issue, Mr. Speaker, it is an economic imperative, and it is long overdue.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TIBERI). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. NORTON. addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. PRICE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PRICE of North Carolina addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

DECONTAMINATION EFFORTS REQUIRE IMMEDIATE ACTION BY CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Oregon?

There was no objection.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, it is time at this juncture appropriate to step back and take stock of recent actions. We have had some commentary here on the floor this evening dealing with the environment and dealing with the recent activities of this Congress and the administration. I think it is appropriate for us to do this, as I have fresh in my mind very vivid memories of a tour that I organized today to visit the exclusive residential area of Spring Valley here in the District of Columbia around the American University campus. It was a tour to be able to understand clearly one of the key environmental issues that deals with 1,000 sites around the country.

Twenty-six years after the Vietnam War, 56 years after the conclusion of World War II, 83 years after World War I, there is still a battle taking place, and it is taking place right here on the soil of America. It involves mines, nerve gases, toxics and explosive shells. This battle has claimed 69 lives and has maimed and injured far more. Sadly, this battle continues every day. If we are not careful in this country, it may continue for another 100 years, 500 years. There are some estimates that the areas of contamination by military

hazardous waste are such that at the current rate, it may take over 1,000 years.

Toxic explosive wastes of our military activities here in the United States, unexploded ordnance on formerly-used defense installations, probably contaminates at least 25 million acres in the United States, and, indeed, that number could be as much as twice as high, approaching 50 million acres or more. Sadly, nobody can even give an accurate appraisal of this problem, but we do know that at the current rate of spending, which is less than \$300 million a year, this problem of many billion dollars of magnitude will take centuries to return the land to safe and productive uses. Sadly, some areas of this country are so damaged that we cannot even attempt to clean them up at all.

Mr. Speaker, unexploded ordnance is a serious problem today. Human activity and wildlife is encroaching on more and more of these sites as our neighborhoods grow, as our cities sprawl, and, at the same time, the natural rhythm of nature, flooding, earthquakes, landslides, aided and abetted by human activity, exposes these dangers as the land mines, as the unexploded bombs and shells work their way to the surface. Today across America we are finding lost and forgotten unexploded ordnance that in some cases was intentionally buried in a feeble attempt just to get rid of it, or we find shells that were fired and missed their mark and did not explode as intended. These are acute dangers.

I recall one example that occurred in San Diego where two children, actually there were three, who were playing on a vacant lot in a subdivision that was formerly military territory. This had been used as a bombing ring, as a target. These children found an unexploded shell, started playing with it. It detonated. It killed two of them and seriously injured a third.

At the sites that I visited today, there is a child care center on the campus of American University that has been closed because the level of toxicity from arsenic is so high that it poses a threat to human health. Across the road there is a grand home that belongs to the Korean Ambassador, and the whole backyard has been excavated away, as they are dealing there again with high levels of soil contamination. There are acres and acres of this site next to the American University campus and some that is on the campus itself that was used to test chemical weapons during World War I. At the height of the activity, there were almost 2,000 people working on this area. There were over 100 buildings. They were testing things like mustard gas, arsenic. There were circles where they tied animals and subjected them to the gas. There were areas where they manufactured these chemical weapons.

When the war was over, we were pretty haphazard about what happened there. In some cases, the buildings

were so contaminated, they just burned them, and then covered them up. There was no careful accounting of the materials, and we have found over the years that some of the shells and explosives and toxics have been exposed.

There was some construction there of late, in the last decades, in the 1990s, and as they were bulldozing away, they found shells that contained toxic explosives. There was a glass container that was broken in the late 1990s during construction that sent workers to the hospital. There was phosphorus that was encountered that when the container was broken open and the phosphorus was exposed to the air, it exploded into flame. Now, this is an area that is developed with homes and a university campus less than a 30-minute bike ride from where I am speaking this evening. We were done with it by 1919, and yet we have yet to thoroughly decontaminate the area.

Now, there are many targets of frustration that citizens can have to direct their anger and concern. They can be frustrated and angry with the Department of Defense or the Corps of Engineers or the EPA or local authorities. People have legitimate concerns about these and other agencies about what they have done in the past and what they are doing now. But sadly, there is one participant in this battle that is missing in action: the United States Congress.

Only we in Congress can set adequate funding levels, can budget clearly, make sure enough money is appropriated to do the job right. Congress can pinpoint managerial responsibility and establish the rules of the game. It is not acceptable to me, and I hope not acceptable to the American public, for Congress to occasionally step in from the sidelines, complain, protest, perhaps shift already inadequate budget resources from one high-priority project to another. This is worse than a zero-sum game and does not advance the goal of protecting the public. Congress needs to report for duty and needs to provide the administrative and financial tools that are necessary.

Now, I am not talking about the active ranges and military readiness. There are issues there, but that is a separate topic for another time. My concern is for the closed, the transferred or the transferring properties where the public is exposed, soon will be exposed, or unsuspecting children and members of the public could potentially be exposed in the future. More than 1,000 years to clean up these sites is not an appropriate timetable when people are at risk, and they are, in fact, at risk every day.

Mr. Speaker, we need to provide the resources to solve this problem, not in 1,000 years or 300 years, but in the lifetime of our children. If we do this, provide the momentum, the energy, there will be improvement in technology, the development of appropriate partnerships that will mean we can make a quantum improvement in our ability to

find these hazards, the unexploded ordnance, to decontaminate the sites, to have the infrastructure companies train personnel to do it right.

I do believe that if we in this Chamber made a commitment that we would get the job done, say, in the next 75 years, it could create such a burst of enthusiasm and energy, that, in fact, we could get the job done far sooner.

Our goal in Congress should be to make sure that the administration and that every Member in the House and the Senate understands what is going on; what is going on in their State, what is going on from border to border, coast to coast, because this is a problem in every single State in the Union. Our goal is to make sure that there is somebody, one person, who is in charge. Our goal is to make sure that there is enough funding so that we can at least get the cleanup done this century, hopefully sooner, and that no child will be at risk for death, dismemberment, or serious illness as a result of the United States Government not cleaning up after itself.

I come here tonight with serious concern about the environment and with initially a plea for bipartisan cooperation in Congress, in the House and in the Senate, and with the administration to solve this problem. That is, in fact, what should be our approach to protecting our environment, to making our communities more livable and our families safe, healthy and more economically secure.

□ 2000

It should be in a bipartisan, objective, thoughtful approach.

Mr. Speaker, I will tell the Members that I have been deeply concerned by the events that have occurred with this new administration. There was in fact an opportunity to take the rhetoric of Governor Bush on the campaign trail, and the rhetoric that we heard from President Bush as he was installed in office, to reach out, to be a compassionate conservative, to work together to solve America's problems. That was what we heard on the campaign trail.

But, as some of us were concerned about on the floor of this Chamber, as we spoke out during the last campaign, it is important to look at a candidate's performance, not just the words.

Frankly, I was concerned that this administration that we have now with President Bush, because of its past record, would not measure up to the rhetoric, the soft and fuzzy language we were hearing on the campaign trail.

Sadly, my worst fears have in fact been confirmed. I will tell the Members candidly, even though I was a strong opponent of the President on the campaign trail, and I had no illusions based on his record as Governor of Texas that he was going to be particularly environmentally sensitive, frankly, I was shocked at what we have been visited with as a nation in the first hours of this administration.

We have heard them push ahead with proposals to solve our energy crisis,

not with the summoning of a call to arms to use our energy more thoughtfully, more carefully, more constructively to conserve. Instead, they are pushing ahead with their proposal to drill for oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, even though this will take perhaps a decade, even though this is opposed by the majority of the American public, even though this will be a false proposal to provide energy security for the United States.

The Secretary of Energy managed to make an entire speech about the so-called energy crisis that we are in right now, and there was profound concern expressed in calling for building 1,600 new generation plants, and virtually no word about conservation. I believe there was one line about energy conservation.

There was no word about the opportunity to conserve oil by improving the mileage of American vehicles, even though this is the area in which it would be easiest for us to take aggressive action.

Indeed, this administration is proposing a budget that will cut the budget of the Department of Energy 7 percent and cut money for energy conservation 10 percent, an absolute wrong-headed approach for energy conservation.

This administration took action to reverse the cleanup regulation for hardrock mining, returning to regulations from 1980 that do not require mining companies to pay for their own cleanup and restoration when mining for silver, gold, and other metals. That is absolutely outrageous, and completely out of sync with where the American public is.

This administration is failing to regulate CO₂ emissions from power plants. This is despite explicit campaign promises from candidate Bush that he was going to introduce mandatory legislation to deal with a reduction of CO₂ emissions. This was a formal presentation of the most highly-scripted campaign perhaps in our Nation's history. They knew exactly what they were doing.

Indeed, President Bush as a candidate attacked, during the debate with Vice President Gore, attacked the Vice President, who has a lifetime of working to protect the environment, because he was too soft; because he, Gore, was not willing to embrace what candidate Bush was promising, but what President Bush turned his back on, changed his mind on, conveniently, after the election when he was facing a little pressure to follow through on his campaign promise.

They are taking action in this administration to delay implementation of the roadless areas protection policy until May, and most people feel that they are simply embracing delays and catering to the special interests that want to open these areas more to timber companies, to off-road vehicles, and that this is just the first step to repeal this important protection.

This administration, with its about-face on the campaign pledge for the CO₂ emissions, is not just breaking a pledge that was made to the American voters. This is having a destabilizing effect on our efforts to work with other national governments to follow through on the Kyoto accords, on the greenhouse emissions treaty. It is angering important allies, and dodging the United States' responsibility to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

It seems to me disingenuous to point a finger at developing countries like China and India and say that they have to solve the problem when the United States, as the greatest polluter of greenhouse gases, emitting six times the world average per capita, twice as much as our allies in developed countries like Japan and Germany, when the United States fails to step forward and to provide leadership in this global concern.

The administration, the President, suggests that we need more time to study whether or not we have a problem with greenhouse gases and global warming, despite the overwhelming consensus of the environmental and scientific community since having 8 of the last 10 years be the highest temperatures on record; as we are seeing the ice caps shrink, as we see glaciers shrink.

The rest of the world knows that we have a problem, and that it is time for the United States to assume leadership.

In fact, President Bush could just simply listen to members of his own cabinet. The Secretary of the Treasury, Paul O'Neill, in his previous life as chairman and CEO of Alcoa Aluminum, likened global warming to a potential disaster on the par of a nuclear holocaust. This was 2 years ago that Secretary of the Treasury, in his prior life as a respected business leader, was saying, we need to get serious. Now President Bush and this administration are falling back from our global responsibility.

I had an eye-opening experience on the campus of American University on the hazards of arsenic. As I was looking at that site of the former military test ground for chemical weapons at American University in the Northwest part of the District of Columbia, I thought about this administration and wondered if we could get them excited about it, because this, after all, is the administration that has now recently revoked the arsenic rule, dismantling a rule that was mandated by Congress to reduce the level of carcinogenic arsenic in water from 50 parts per billion to 10 parts per billion and provide healthier drinking water for the American public.

This is not some crazy standard that is being proposed by the rabid environmentalists in the Clinton administration, this is the standard of the European Union, of the World Health Organization. This was the standard that was recommended for the American

public for its protection. Yet, this administration has now revoked that rule.

It is hard to imagine what would have happened if candidate Bush had spoken what was in his mind and his heart on the campaign trail. I think if he had proposed revoking the arsenic rule as a candidate, I do not think we would have had to worry about hanging chads in Florida. I do not think the election would have even been close, the election where Vice President Gore got the majority of votes of the American public.

This administration has proposed eliminating Project Impact, a creative project with the Federal Emergency Management Administration that is working with over 2,500 partners in the private sector around the country, and dozens and dozens of governments are working to eliminate hazards before they occur from flooding, hurricane, and earthquake.

This administration is ignoring the energy crisis in ways that could have the most impact now. If we ask any of the experts in the energy field, there is only one thing that is going to make a difference in the short term to provide more energy for those of us in the West who are having a serious problem, particularly in the Pacific Northwest. Because of the drought, we have been supplying energy that we cannot afford to share, actually, with our friends in California. We are paying far higher prices for the privilege. Yet, if we ask the experts in industry, in the environmental community, in business, in the neighborhoods and local government, the only thing that is going to make a difference now is energy conservation: making do with what we have in a more creative way.

There are simple things we can do. Painting the roofs in California a light color that is reflective could cut the energy requirement for air conditioning by 30 percent. But where are we hearing a call to arms from this administration for people to do something right now that is going to make a difference in cutting down on the waste of energy? We listen in vain. It is not on their radar screen.

We have seen this administration move forward threatening the designation of important national monuments. One of the areas that the last administration will be known for for generations in a positive way is moving to protect critical designations of national monuments, the most designations since the Antiquities Act was first used by President Teddy Roosevelt almost a century ago.

Now this administration has signaled its intention to revisit these national monument designations. They want to have more comment to see if there is more that could be done for vehicle use, grazing, extracting more water, and mining that could alter or threaten these national treasures.

We have seen the budget that has been submitted by this administration

that was going to be more compassionate, kinder, gentler. They are, in their rush to have a tax cut that was supposed to only be \$1.6 trillion, and now is over \$2 trillion and counting in terms of the proposal they want, they are, in order to be able to carve out money in the budget to do this, they are reducing funding for everything from child care assistance for low-income families, programs to combat child abuse, cutting funding for the Interior Department, the EPA, and important bipartisan conservation agreements.

As I mentioned, this budget proposes a 7 percent reduction in the budget of the Department of Energy when allegedly some people in this administration think we have an energy crisis, and a 10 percent reduction in energy conservation when this is the only approach that is going to make a difference this year.

I recently had lunch with the retiring superintendent of Yellowstone Park, Michael Finley, a creative, brilliant public servant who has served us, and served us well, for over 30 years.

Mr. Finley, and I think it is no coincidence that he is an Oregonian and has this reverence for the treasure that he was able to have stewardship for, he called forth the critical requirement to control the use of snowmobiles in our national parks, like Yellowstone.

□ 2015

Mr. Speaker, it is a tragedy and a travesty to have people roaring through at 60 miles an hour, 80 miles an hour, spewing forth pollution, the noise, the hazard to wildlife, the hazard to the air, the hazard to the tranquility that other park-goers treasure and, indeed, a risk to each other in terms of the death that results from the reckless operation.

This administration is now reviewing the important Yellowstone-Grand Tetons rule and possibly settling lawsuits with snowmobile groups in order to reverse the rulemaking, an outrage for these national treasures. Again, candidate Bush gave no hint that he would be involved in such reckless antienvironmental activity.

Another area that is going to have significant environmental inconveniences has to do with the judicial process. One of the things that concerned a number of us when candidate Bush was running for office was his identification of people like Justice Scalia and Justice Thomas as his role models for judicial candidates that he was going to nominate for our highest courts.

Given the environmental record of those two justices, it did not give much comfort to people who care about protecting the environment, because increasingly given the gridlock in Congress, citizens have to resort to our courts for the enforcement of environmental laws; and sometimes if there is an administration that is recalcitrant and bent on doing things like we are talking about with this administra-

tion, sometimes recourse to the courts is the only avenue open to citizens to protect the environment.

Mr. Speaker, I found it extraordinarily disconcerting that this administration has chosen to reverse a policy implemented by President Eisenhower over 50 years ago to provide the American Bar Association as a nonpartisan impartial body that would review the qualifications of judicial nominees.

This has served us well, Republican, Democrat, conservative and liberal. Every President since Eisenhower has relied on this screening process to help ensure, regardless of the philosophy of the candidates in question, to ensure the highest quality in terms of their standards, their qualifications.

This administration has decided to not have that impartial professional review from the bar association. They have removed the ABA from this role of interviewing the peers of the nominees and other people in the legal community about their competence, their integrity, and their judicial temperament; and instead it is all going to be done in the White House with the aid and assistance of organizations that are by no stretch of the imagination impartial.

In fact, you have seen in the newspapers of this country the expressions of glee on the part of the most reactionary elements that they have been able to push the ABA, making it easier to be able to have the most extreme people nominated and make it easier to confirm.

Finally, I would reference the repeal of the ergonomic standards for repetitive stress. This was important in terms of the work that is done. And I am not concerned frankly by the majority of the American employers. The vast majority of the people that I represent in Oregon, in areas that I have worked around the country, I am confident that these rules would have been easy for the vast majority of the business community to comply with; but in fact, the majority of them probably did not even need these rules in the first place. That did not mean that those rules were not important.

I wonder if representatives of this administration had talked, as I had, to a woman who was a chicken-thigh deboner, a woman who worked 8 hours, 10 hours, 12 hours a day in a cold workplace dealing with semifrozen chicken carcasses that speed past her, the same repetitive motion time and time again, talking about what happened to her, to her hands, to the amazing stress and the mind-numbing activity. It was for a woman like that that we needed to have that ergonomic rule.

There was a gentleman within an hour's drive from where we are, on Capitol Hill this evening, who is a chicken catcher, who catches chickens at the factory farms hour after hour after hour in the sweltering heat gathering them up, the feathers, the dust for hours at a time and carrying them to be loaded to go off for slaughter.

This is back-breaking, mind-numbing work; and these people need the benefit of the ergonomics rule. It is estimated that the stress and strain of repetitive-stress injury costs the economy over \$50 billion a year, but it is the largest single workplace safety and health problem in the United States today.

It is not just cost. It is the toll on workers who do not have the benefit in many cases of enlightened employers, the protection of unions for whom this rule promulgated by OSHA would have made all the difference in the world.

This President signed in to law legislation to overturn these standards and is going to have a serious effect on the health and welfare of tens of thousands of American workers who need this help the most.

Mr. Speaker, this is a summary of some of the most depressing actions on the part of this administration in just the first 3 months. These are not the actions of candidate Governor George Bush. These are activities that in some cases violate explicit campaign promises, misleading the American public about its intentions. There are things that are going to have serious consequences for decades to come.

Mr. Speaker, I am hopeful that we will have an opportunity to review in greater detail these activities on the floor of this Chamber. I am hopeful that the American public is going to push back to hold this administration accountable for the specifics and the rhetoric that was embodied on the campaign trail.

It is important for us to take several of these items to be able to focus on them, to make sure that the American public is, in fact, heard.

I think there is no area that perhaps there is a greater difference between where the American public is and where this administration is pushing than drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. This is one of the premier approaches to this administration for solving the energy crisis that they are talking about.

Bear in mind, as I mentioned, this administration is not proposing an increase in conservation. In fact, they are proposing to cut conservation dollars. They are proposing to cut the budget for the Department of Energy. Yet they are proposing to solve the problem by drilling in the Arctic Wildlife Refuge.

This refuge is a more sensitive area than Prudhoe Bay. It is a resting, nesting and breeding area for over 160 species of birds, including species that visit each of the lower 48 States.

It is known as America's Sarengetti because of the huge herds of caribou, 130,000 of them that calf and rear their young on the coastal plane. These are the herds that provide subsistence for native Alaskans in an area whose way of life would be destroyed by a disruption of the herd.

We could talk about the disruption of the habitat of significant polar bear denning habitat, but the time this

evening actually does not permit me to go into the detail that I would; but suffice it to say that this is an area of deep, deep concern for many in the environmental community, because 95 percent of Alaska North Slope is already available for oil and gas exploitation and leasing.

This Wildlife Refuge is only the remaining 5 percent and it is the most sensitive. It is an area first and foremost that makes no sense in terms of a timely reaction to the energy problems that we have now.

First of all, only about 1 percent of the State that is having the most difficulty, California, comes from petroleum-based sources. Of that 1 percent, the Arctic Wildlife Refuge is not going to help at all. It will take conservatively 10 years before this oil is going to flow and be available.

But reflect for a moment the total amount of oil that would be available, according to reasonable projections, is only about a 6-month supply for the American public. It is an amount, to put it in perspective, that we could save if we simply increase the miles per gallon of SUVs in this country 3 miles a gallon. Three miles a gallon, we would not have to drill at all.

Okay. Maybe that is a radical notion to take SUVs and have a 3-mile per gallon improvement. Forgive me, but let us suggest a less radical proposal, because the mileage fleet numbers for the United States this year are tied for a 20-year low. Just taking that 20-year low and improving it $\frac{1}{2}$ mile per gallon across the board for the fleet, we would not have to drill in the Arctic.

But what about energy security some of my colleagues suggest? This is an area that will improve America's energy independence and security by being able to exploit our own resources. This is perhaps the most bizarre notion that we are going to take an aging pipeline, 800 miles long that already has problems, and we are going to rely for our energy security for protecting this 800-mile length of the pipeline.

Everybody that I have talked to acknowledges that this 800-mile aging pipeline is already subjected to any deranged person, to hostile powers, to accident. If this is what we are relying on, we are potentially in big trouble in the future, because this 800-mile pipeline is a sitting duck for a terrorist, a foreign threat, or simply a deranged person in this country. We have seen them act.

It is far more appropriate, I would suggest, rather than drilling in the Arctic Wildlife Refuge, for us to get serious about improving fuel efficiency, improving how we utilize energy in this country, if we were only to listen to the American public.

□ 2030

The vast majority of the American public says nothing, and something that I have found intriguing, even citizens of Alaska are conflicted on this

issue. A slight majority in the most recent poll I have seen oppose development: 46.7 percent to 45.7 percent.

Now, these are people for whom the permanent fund in Alaska State with no sales tax, no income tax, that runs on revenue from oil, and every man, woman and child who has resided in Alaska for more than a year gets a payment, I believe last year it was \$2,000, these people with a financial stake in drilling, a slight majority oppose drilling in the ANWR. But this is not the limit of where the administration has reversed its direction and moved in the wrong way relating to the environment.

Mr. Speaker, we look at hardrock mining. One of the things that I was pleased the last administration did was to deal with proposing the regulations under which the Bureau of Land Management dealt with hardrock mining. The Clinton administration, after 4 years of work listening to the public, listening to the experts, looking at the impact, issued new regulations. These 3809 hardrock mining regulations required that the companies that mine for silver, for gold, copper, lead and zinc, that they have to administer and pay for cleaning and restoration efforts on the land once the mine closes to reduce the risk of water pollution. Reversing these regulations will open legal loopholes for the mining industry and allow them to evade cleanup costs after they finish mining.

From Pennsylvania to Montana to my State of Oregon, we have seen the devastation from the mining industry, often on public lands owned by the public. The mining companies are able to extract these minerals for a pittance, and bear in mind that the Mining Act of 1872 is exactly as it appeared when it was signed into law by President Ulysses S. Grant. It is not adequate to protect the American public. The American public does not get adequate value for the minerals that are extracted under it, unless you think \$250 an acre, in some cases \$5 an acre, is adequate payment to the American public for the ability to exploit, extract, and then leave ravished land.

These standards have aggravated the mining industry. They have prompted numerous lawsuits, and now the Bush administration has requested the return to the inadequate, inferior regulations of 1980.

Mr. Speaker, I am frankly shocked that we have seen this reversal. I am disappointed at a time when I would hope that there would be some areas that would be exempt from this extreme activity. According to Taxpayers for Common Sense, a watchdog agency that has helped us a great deal to sort of focus a spotlight on this, a non-partisan group that is looking over our shoulders, the return to the old rule would allow mining practices to continue that will cost taxpayers more than \$1 billion to clean up.

I think it is another example where we cannot afford these type of rever-

sals of the hard, painstaking activity of the previous administration.

Mr. Speaker, I referenced earlier in my opening summary that the administration has turned its back on the arsenic rules. I mentioned that this was something that was heavy on my mind because I had visited polluted sites here in the District of Columbia where arsenic contamination is something that we are spending millions of dollars to try to eliminate, yet last week the Environmental Protection Agency, and it is not just EPA, it is the Environmental Protection Agency, the same agency that was caught flat-footed when President Bush reversed himself on his explicit campaign promise to reverse CO₂ emissions, the EPA has announced its intention to withdraw a new drinking water regulation on arsenic that was approved by the Clinton administration.

Administrator Whitman announced that the EPA will propose to withdraw the pending standard that was issued on January 22 that would have reduced the acceptable level of arsenic in water from 50 parts per billion to 10 parts per billion.

Mr. Speaker, this is a reduction in a standard of a known carcinogen, and it is not some wild-eyed environmental proposal. And forgive me at times for being a wild-eyed environmentalist, which is something, given the alternative, is not that bad. This 10-parts-per-billion standard is already the standard in place to protect the people in the European Union. This is the World Health Organization standard that is already in place. At least 11 million Americans rely on drinking water with arsenic standards higher than the proposed standard, and one that I think should give pause to Americans across the country.

This 55-parts-per-billion standard was adopted in 1942 by the Public Health Service. This was before we had proven the causal connection between arsenic and cancer. The National Academy of Sciences found that the EPA's old standard was not protective of health and should be reduced as promptly as possible. We do not need to study this anymore. It should be reduced as promptly as possible.

The National Academy of Sciences found in its unanimous 1999 report, Arsenic in Drinking Water, that the prior standard that the Bush administration proposes that we go back to "does not," and I am quoting, "achieve EPA's goal for public health protection; and, therefore, requires downward revision as promptly as possible."

The Academy found that drinking water at the current standard that the Bush administration now wants to go back to could easily result in a fatal cancer risk of 1 in 100. That is a cancer risk 1,000 times higher than the EPA allows for food, and 100 times higher than the EPA has ever allowed for tap water contaminants. Why in the name of all that is holy does this administration plan to go back, to reverse that standard, to study it further?

Arsenic is found in the tap water of millions of American homes. Over 26 million American homes have levels averaging over 5 parts per billion. Scientists point out that not everybody is equally susceptible. It is the children and pregnant women who are especially susceptible. A wider margin of safety might be needed when conducting risk assessments, the National Academy found, because of variations of the sensitivity of these individuals. But the Bush administration has proposed that we go back to the standard that was good enough for 1942.

Mr. Speaker, I am deeply concerned that this Congress, in its rush to focus on a very narrow agenda from the administration where they do not want to talk about these inconvenient proposals, these inconvenient reminders of their campaign pledges, they want to narrow the discussion to their economic agenda, and actually I do not have any qualms about the American public turning a searchlight on that proposal, on the \$1.6 trillion tax cut that was conjured up by Presidential candidate Bush 2 years ago because it was just right. We did not need it. The economy was rolling along and, therefore, we needed to return the surplus. Now the same proposal is needed when the economy is going down because that is somehow magically going to stimulate the economy. But of course that was not going to stimulate the economy 2 years ago.

There is a certain discontinuity, I find, in terms of that argument, and I would wish that the American public would focus on it. I would wish that the American public would focus on the illusory \$5.6 trillion surplus that the administration is claiming, except if they use the same budget assumptions that the recent commission reporting on Social Security and Medicare reported on, that the budget surplus evaporates. They assume that we are going to spend at a lower rate than even the revolution of Mr. Gingrich when they were riding high, and we never achieved the 4 percent reduction. They are assuming that tax breaks that we know are going to be reinstated somehow are magically going to go away. And the fact that millions of Americans are going to be subjected to the alternative minimum tax, and we know that we are going to fix that at a cost of probably \$400 billion, all of these are ignored.

Mr. Speaker, I am happy to debate these on the floor of the Chamber. It would be nice to have debate time rather than rushing it through. At least our colleagues in the Senate are going to take some time and deliberate on it. I think it is ironic that this tax cut my colleagues think is so important, they have permitted 1 hour debate. At a time when we were standing around waiting for my colleagues to come back from meetings across the country, we could have had an opportunity to discuss it, if not amend it.

While we have that debate, it is important that every American reflect on

what is going on in the back rooms here in Washington, D.C., what is going on in the agencies as we are having campaign pledges reversed, as we are having campaign promises ignored, and we are having vital protections for the American public put at risk.

I came to Congress committed to work in a bipartisan, cooperative way for the Federal Government to be a better partner working with communities to make them more livable, to make our families safe, healthy and more economically secure.

Mr. Speaker, I fear that reversing the arsenic standard, drilling in the Arctic Wildlife Refuge, ignoring energy conservation, and turning our back on our leadership in global climate change is not in keeping with that goal.

Mr. Speaker, I am hopeful that there will be time for Congress to give voice to what the American public is concerned about in protecting the environment, and urge the Bush administration to reconsider these ill-advised policies. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to discuss these issues this evening.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman from Oregon, Mr. BLUMENAUER, for his leadership in the fight to build livable communities in a livable world.

I rise tonight to speak out against the pollution of our waters, our atmosphere, our wilderness, and our children.

Arsenic causes cancer. Global temperatures are climbing every year.

These are not wild theories, they are established science.

Nonetheless, the Bush Administration is turning back the clock to 1942 on arsenic regulations, is seeking to plunder the Arctic Wildlife Refuge, and is declaring that the Kyoto Protocol on Global Climate Change is dead on arrival.

As a candidate, George W. Bush declared, "We will require all power plants to meet clean air standards in order to reduce emissions of sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxide, mercury and carbon dioxide within a reasonable period of time."

He also states that voluntary reductions were insufficient: "in Texas, we've done better with mandatory reductions, and I believe the nation can do better."

I agree. We can do better.

However, as President, Mr. Bush has reversed himself on carbon dioxide, claiming that the nation cannot afford to reduce emissions.

The fact is, we can't afford not to.

We cannot erase decades of progress.

We cannot wipe out the accomplishments of such wild eyed radicals as Richard Nixon who signed the Endangered Species and Clean Air Acts.

We have to move forward, not backward.

We have to set drinking water standards that will safeguard human health.

We need to establish protections for the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and other irreplaceable wilderness areas.

And we need to live up to our commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions because global warming threatens the well-being of the entire planet.

Tomorrow, as a first step in restoring our national and international commitments to a

cleaner environment, I will be introducing the Carbon Dioxide Emissions and Global Climate Change Act.

This resolution will send a strong message to the President and the country that Congress will hold Mr. Bush to his campaign promises, that it recognizes that global warming poses grave dangers to our environment, our economy, and our national security, and that this country must seek to reduce its CO₂ emissions.

As a member of the International Relations Committee, I am fully aware of the impact that abandoning our commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions will have on our allies in Europe and throughout the world.

As a member of the human race, I am aware of the impact that it will have on our planet.

We must uphold our commitments and responsibilities to the rest of the world.

We are the biggest contributor to global warming, and we must also take the lead in reducing pollution.

Clean air and clean water are the most basic of human rights.

However, we have a President who apparently feels that arsenic is good for kids, that oil spills are good for caribou, and that excessive carbon dioxide is good for all of us.

The American people disagree.

They overwhelmingly oppose weakening arsenic standards, drilling in the Arctic Wildlife Refuge, and abandoning CO₂ reductions.

We cannot turn back the clock, we cannot abandon our commitments, and we cannot give up this fight for our future.

□ 2045

ELIMINATING THE ESTATE TAX

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CANTOR). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. Speaker, when I came to Congress a little over 4 years ago, I came here with some very specific objectives in mind as well. And since coming to Congress, we have achieved a lot of the things that I sought to do in working with the House and our brethren in the Senate and the administration. For the 4th year in row we have balanced the Federal budget. We are actually paying down the publicly held debt. We have done that. This year it will be over \$600 billion.

We have protected Social Security and Medicare. We cut taxes back in 1997, something that had not happened in a very long time. In fact, the truth is the budget being balanced for the first time 4 years ago was the first time since 1969 when I was 8 years old. All my formative years all I heard about was deficits, deficits, deficits. And so finally we have gotten the fiscal house in order here in the United States Congress.

It is sort of ironic that our colleagues on the other side under whose stewardship the debt ballooned and spending ballooned now have this new-found sense of fiscal responsibility which in