

hand knowledge of that in his former position. We have to bring new technology to smaller communities across the country so they can take advantage of the well-educated workforce and higher education infrastructure that already exists in or near so many of these smaller communities.

And, we have an obligation to ensure fairness. We should not favor the richest Americans at the expense of the vast majority of Americans.

So how should we go forward? Will President Bush try to push through his one-sided and lop-sided proposals with the votes of his own party? If he does, I will respectfully have to dissent. Or will he sit down and negotiate to reduce its size and make it fairer to more Americans? If he does this then I hope I can support the outcome. Bipartisanship is a two-way street—it's not about Democrats supporting Republican proposals or even Republicans supporting Democratic proposals. It's about Republicans and Democrats working together to do what is right for the country. And the true test of leadership is not appealing to the people under the guise of bipartisanship, but actually hammering out a bipartisan compromise bill that merits the support of both sides of the aisle. That's the right way to pass a tax cut and protect our budget priorities.

And it is certainly what I hear when I meet with business leaders, workers and civic leaders in places like Rochester, and Rome, and Brooklyn and Watertown, just to name a few of the places I've been in the last week. They want a tax cut, but they also want to make sure we make the right choices for our budget.

History calls us to reject a spendthrift tax plan that would threaten our efforts to reform and modernize Medicare—including a long overdue prescription drug benefit that is voluntary, affordable and available to all beneficiaries.

I also fear a spendthrift tax plan would hurt our ability to invest in the military. As the gentleman from Connecticut, Mr. LIEBERMAN, said this week, “the President's tax plan would consume more than 80 percent of the on-budget surplus, leaving nothing but fiscal leftovers for national security.”

I don't think any of us want that.

For me, the details of the 2002 budget have to be negotiated. But the big choice is clear. We must pass a budget that keeps paying down the debt, provides sensible tax cuts and invests in priorities that matter to the people we represent. We must stay the course that has helped us build the longest economic expansion in our nation's history. And we must avoid a course that takes us back, throws caution to the wind and risks mortgaging our children's future.

I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. CARNAHAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Under the previous order, 20 minutes shall be under the control of the Senator from Missouri, Mrs. CARNAHAN.

The Senator may proceed.

Mrs. CARNAHAN. Thank you, Mr. President.

(The remarks of Mrs. CARNAHAN pertaining to the introduction of S. 342 are located in today's RECORD under “Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.”)

Mrs. CARNAHAN. I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, is there an existing order with respect to morning business?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senator from North Dakota, Mr. DORGAN, has 15 minutes under his control.

CONGRATULATING SENATOR CARNAHAN

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, Senator CARNAHAN just gave her first speech in the Senate. I listened to her speech. Our country has been blessed with men and women who have stepped forward to serve over many years. Some have stepped forward during times of great difficulty, none in more difficult circumstances than Senator CARNAHAN. Her husband, a candidate for the Senate, was tragically killed in an airplane crash, and she subsequently was appointed to the Senate.

I listened to her speech this morning. She will make a significant contribution to this country and to the debate on important issues such as education in the Senate. I know her late husband would be so proud today of the legacy for which she continues fighting—progress in our country's education system. I thank her for what she is doing and for her service to our country and congratulate her this morning on her statement to the Senate.

ENERGY PRICES

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I rise to comment about the situation in this country with respect to energy.

Last evening I was signing letters, as is so often the case for those of us who serve in public life. We receive a great deal of mail, many phone calls, hundreds of e-mails every day, and then, of course, the old-fashioned way—we get letters actually written and stuck in

an envelope and mailed to us. It is among the most important things we do, to try to respond to constituents.

Last evening, as is the case with most of my colleagues, I was spending time late in the evening reading mail and signing mail that has come from North Dakota. I came across a couple of letters I want to read to my colleagues and then describe what it is we need to be doing to respond to some of these issues.

I received a letter from a man named John. I have not contacted him, so I will not use his last name. John, from Fargo, ND, wrote the following:

Dear Senator DORGAN,

I am in complete shock after receiving my natural gas bill yesterday. I live in a modern house that is well insulated, I am careful about closing doors and ensuring that all the windows are sealed, I set my thermostat at 68 degrees (now even lower), and yet I receive a bill for natural gas alone, for over \$726 for a one month period. How is that possible?

Please tell me, Senator, how it is that we can live in the most technologically advanced country in the world, yet we can't maintain adequate stocks of natural gas to get us through the winter. Are we being gouged by producers?

He then asks a series of additional questions. I will not read the entire letter. I will only say that he asks a question he could ask on behalf of millions and millions of Americans who are opening their bills now to heat their homes and discovering, after 2 of the coldest first 2 months of the winter in a century in this country, it is costing a fortune to pay for natural gas bills, propane bills, home heating fuel bills. John writes a letter saying: I am doing all the right things. I have a home that is well insulated. I seal it. I keep the thermostat at 68, and my heating bill for natural gas last month is \$726, and I can't afford it.

I have a second letter from another fellow also named John from North Dakota. He described what happened to him. He and his wife had purchased an older building that had been subdivided into several apartments. They took an apartment in their retirement years and were renting the others. He said he had been paying \$300 a month for heat. When his February bill arrived, it was \$1,091. He went to the office of the gas provider to talk to them. He said:

I left the office wondering what to do. I didn't want to tell my wife the truth about this. She doesn't know about it yet. Today is her birthday, and tomorrow is our 53rd wedding anniversary. We have been making it okay in our retirement years, nothing to spare with the \$1600 monthly income from our five apartments. This is our retirement home. We have no choice now but to sell it. Our \$1,000 monthly bill would be impossible and yet they say it is going to go up even more. We don't want to move, but there is not much else we can do.

I am sure all of us are getting identical letters from around the country. What is happening? What on Earth has happened that has caused fuel bills to double, triple, and, in some cases, even quadruple? When people get fuel bills for \$600, \$700, \$800 a month—and in

North Dakota we have had a bitterly cold winter, the first 2 months especially, and especially the last few weeks again—it is sticker shock to get bills like that.

Now I want to mention a couple of additional points. I will be very brief. First of all, we need to take some emergency action. We need more money in LIHEAP. We are out of money. We have to do a supplemental at some point, and there has to be money for the low-income energy assistance program.

No. 2, I have suggested, in legislation I have joined others in introducing, a tax credit, an income tax credit to offset about 50 percent of the increase in home heating fuel bills of this year versus last year.

That is a way, it seems to me, to use a tax credit to put some money into people's pockets to offset about 50 percent of these increased bills. That would also be helpful.

Legislation will be introduced today that would deal with weatherization, LIHEAP, conservation grants to States, and increased energy efficiency in the Federal Government. Senator BINGAMAN has been working on that along with others, and I have been working with him, as well. We have a lot of things to do, both in the short term on an emergency basis, and in the long term. We also are investigating potential causes for the natural gas price increases.

But we also need, at the same time, to understand that we have the requirement to not only find more natural gas and oil—we stopped looking when it went to \$10 a barrel—and now it is at \$30 a barrel and there is a great deal of exploration again. I think all the evidence indicates that there is a record amount of drilling, and we will have more natural gas and oil coming on line within 6 months, 12 months, 24 months; but that is not going to solve the problem for the next 3 months, or even 6 months, or a year. So we are doing all of that.

At the same time, we need to be more concerned about the development of both renewable energy and also about conservation. Renewable energy, such as wind and biomass, can contribute a significant amount to this country's energy future. Any energy program that makes sense also must include an element of conservation. That is why I talk about weatherization and other issues.

Most important, I think, this ought to lead us to the question of the deregulation in areas of essential service. We need to be sure we have an adequate supply and demand relationship in areas of essential services for the American people. I don't suggest we re-regulate natural gas supplies, but we ought to have a safe harbor somewhere with respect to production and consumption, so we don't get into a situation where people's natural gas bills spring up two, three, four, five times over what they were previously, for

causes to which they didn't contribute. So I wanted to bring attention to these two letters from two fellows named John who wrote me lengthy letters about their respective experiences.

It is painful and difficult and, in some cases perhaps impossible, for some people to pay these kinds of home heating bills. They don't have the money. We need to do something on an emergency basis to try to be helpful to them. More importantly, this country needs a long-term energy strategy that works. Under both Republicans and Democrats, we have not had an energy strategy. We are far too dependent on the Middle East and on foreign sources of oil. If, God forbid, something should happen to interrupt the pipeline of foreign oil coming into this country, and all industrial countries, we would have an emergency on our hands.

We must do something to try to escape the excessive dependence that now exists on foreign energy, notwithstanding all of the current problems we have with respect to the dislocation between supply and demand. Energy issues are critical, and we must do something about them. It is time to have a national energy policy that works, No. 1, and, No. 2, it is time this Congress understands there is an emergency in parts of this country this winter, with respect to the need for some help to pay home heating fuel bills that are exceeding the ability of some people to pay them. That emergency includes the need to provide more money for low-income energy assistance, weatherization, and other related issues.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Missouri is recognized.

SENATOR CARNAHAN'S MAIDEN SPEECH

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, I rise briefly to welcome and congratulate my colleague, Senator CARNAHAN, the newly elected Senator from Missouri, on her first remarks on the floor. I apologize for not being able to be here when she made the comments. I was in a Health Committee meeting asking questions about Missouri education programs of the Secretary of Education.

I understand Senator CARNAHAN was talking about education on the floor, and I know education and children's issues are going to be areas where we will work together. Yesterday, Senator CARNAHAN joined as a cosponsor on a couple measures that are very important, ensuring 100-percent deductibility on health insurance for the self-employed, which is very important to farmers and small business people in my State, and also providing relief from the draconian cuts enforced by HCFA on home health care agencies, which cost us half the home health care agencies in Missouri.

We have many areas in which we are looking forward to working together. I

tell my colleagues that Senator CARNAHAN has been a long-time friend. She and her family were close associates in Jefferson City. Senator CARNAHAN was best known in Missouri as a very strong helpmate of our late Governor, treasurer, and servant, Mel Carnahan. I got to know her very well when they shared the same public housing in which we had lived, the Governor's mansion in Missouri. She was a very strong champion of the preservation of that mansion and a most gracious hostess for all the people of Missouri who came there.

After the terrible tragedy which befell her family in our State last year, she was strong and gracious and was widely respected and admired by all Missourians. I know colleagues on this side of the aisle who have not had an opportunity to get to know her and work with her will look forward to doing so. I congratulate her and wish her well after making her first speech on the Senate floor. I know there will be many other issues which affect our mutual constituents on which we will be working together.

I thank the Chair and my colleagues for indulging me as I extend a very warm welcome to Senator CARNAHAN.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from South Carolina is recognized.

(The remarks of Mr. HOLLINGS pertaining to the introduction of S. 341 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ALLARD). Under the previous order, the time until 11:30 a.m. shall be under the control of the Senator from Arizona, Mr. KYL, or his designee.

The Senator from Arizona.

ESTATE TAX

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I was surprised to read the headlines in the paper this morning—and I actually saw a little bit of this on the news last night—that billionaires in the United States actually support the estate tax and oppose President Bush's plan to repeal the estate tax.

One would think for a moment that is a man-bites-dog story; that is counterintuitive. Upon reflection, it actually makes a lot of sense and makes no sense. I will discuss that today. I will get back to the billionaires in just a moment.

First, to set the stage, we all know President Bush has proposed an important and innovative set of tax relief proposals that will help working American families, will help the economy at this time when it is beginning to falter, and will provide more fairness in our Tax Code. It has three essential features. There may be some other pieces added to this by the Congress.

Primarily, it calls for reduction in marginal income tax rates. That way, everybody who pays taxes receives a tax benefit, tax rate relief.