

However, the results from introducing vouchers in areas where public schools are failing our students are not only academic. Yes, test results have increased, but so have high school completion rates, college attendance rates, and parental satisfaction. In addition, students in private schools are better disciplined and feel safer in their school.

The Federal Government already provides a type of voucher to low- to middle-income students with the Pell grant program. Pell grants are given to students to attend any college or university that they want; be it public, private, or parochial. The Federal Government has supported this, and as a result the American higher education system is the envy of the world.

How is a Pell grant any different than a voucher for elementary or secondary school?

I am not here today to attack our public schools. In most places, including my own state, our public schools are doing an outstanding job. But, in some places they are not. Some schools are simply failing to educate the children who attend them.

Vouchers not only help students leave these failing schools, but also help to foster change in the schools they are leaving. Principals, teachers and superintendents do not want to have failing schools. They want their school to produce smart and productive children.

In fact, with the introduction of the A+ program in Florida, failing schools did improve. Schools given a D or F improved by implementing longer school days, providing additional teacher training and professional development opportunities, and creating special programs to improve math and reading skills for at-risk students.

This is what I want to see happening nationwide. I want to see our public schools improve; to prove to us that they can teach our students just as well, if not better, than private schools.

I believe that this legislation provides the assistance that many public schools need to foster these changes and improvements. But I also believe that this amendment is a necessary part of this legislation. This amendment ensures that students in school districts that are struggling to improve student achievement will be given a chance to attend a school that does improve achievement.

I hope that my colleagues will support this amendment, and support children in failing schools receive a better education.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senator from Minnesota is recognized.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Madam President, because there are other Senators desiring to speak on this, I can do this in less than 5 minutes. An awful lot has been said.

I was listening to my colleague from Nevada, and I thought I might say at

the beginning, in terms of my background, all of our children went to public schools. My wife Sheila worked at the library of the high school. I think this reminds me of a debate I was involved in with Senator HATCH from Utah when I first came to the Senate, a sharp debate, but done with some friendliness and a twinkle in our eye.

I said to Senator HATCH, if Democrats and Republicans in the Senate could say to me as a Senator from Minnesota, we have lived up to our commitment to leaving no child behind—I have heard so much about leaving no child behind: We have fully funded pre-kindergarten education so every child in America comes to kindergarten ready to learn—that is where the Federal Government could be a real player; we have fully funded the title I program for children from disadvantaged backgrounds. We have lived up to our commitment to fund the IDEA program for children with special needs; We have voted for smaller class size and voted to get more teachers, good teachers into teaching, to join many good teachers who are teaching; we have voted for there to be an investment of money to rebuild crumbling schools because crumbling schools tell the children we don't give a damn; we have voted for resources for support services so there are counselors and teacher assistance and to help kids in reading; We have done it all, and none of it has worked; We have made our commitment to public education, and it has not worked; at that point in time, I might be the first person to embrace vouchers. But we have not done any of that. It is for that reason alone that I vigorously oppose this amendment introduced by the Senator from New Hampshire.

Second, in my understanding in this proposal—by the way, the exclusive private schools cost a lot—I don't know how it is that low-income children are going to be able to afford this, even with the help they get here. This is fantasy land to believe that is the case.

There is not a requirement to accept children, for example, who have special needs. If that is the case, and I believe it is, I oppose this amendment for that reason alone. I do not support public money that is not linked to making sure that every child will be able to benefit, including children with special needs. I have made my case.

One other point. This bill is called BEST. This piece of legislation in its present form so far, beyond testing every child at every grade from grade 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and telling every school district in every State they have to do it, I see no guarantee anywhere in this legislation that provides any resources to make sure every child will have the same opportunity to learn. I don't see it in this legislation. I don't see it. It didn't happen last week with the trigger amendment on title 1. I am not aware of any agreement with the administration. This is putting the cart ahead of the horse, talking about

vouchers, without making the commitment to public education.

The tragedy is we have plenty of issues in our States, huge disparities of resources between children in more affluent districts and districts less affluent, States that could do better with surpluses, and Minnesota is an example. I cannot believe we are not making more of an investment in education in our own State. But at the Federal level, Senators, we have not even come close to matching the words we speak with the action we are taking. We have not lived up to our commitment to leaving no child behind, which I have said a million times, cannot be accomplished on a tin-cup education budget. That is all we have.

Until we make the commitment to invest in the skills and intellect and character of all children in our country—and it starts with education, which is the foundation of opportunity—I could never support this voucher proposal. I hope it is defeated.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senator from Massachusetts is recognized.

GLOBAL WARMING

Mr. KERRY. Madam President, yesterday President Bush, in the Rose Garden, conducted a ceremony in which he addressed the question of global warming and our environment. There are many issues on the table, obviously, as the President meets in Europe. I don't want to discuss those issues now because the President is abroad, and I think that would not be appropriate.

However, it is appropriate, because the President spoke yesterday about the subject of global warming, and I think it is important to respond to his comments.

Regrettably—I say this with an enormous sense of lost opportunity—the President did not offer our Nation any specific policy as to how he now plans to address some of the basic fundamental, easily acceptable concepts with respect to global warming. The President did accept science at the beginning of his comments, but at the end of his comments again he raised questions about the science, which seems to be the good cop/bad cop aspect of the comments the administration is making with respect to this issue.

The President essentially called for more study and said his administration is currently engaged in a review. Most who have been involved in this issue for 10 years or more and who have accepted the science understand there are a clear set of priorities that do not require a study that effective leadership could immediately move to put into place without an economic downside but with an enormous positive upside for our country and for the globe. More study is good. I am not suggesting there are not elements of this issue where we don't have an enormous

amount of science to still develop. I will talk about that in a moment.

In any system as complex as global climate change, there are uncertainties. Obviously, we have to continue research. However, we will find, I am confident, as the National Academy of Sciences warned last week, that the longer we go without taking the simple, clearly definable steps that there is consensus on among most people who have seriously studied this issue, the more we procrastinate, then the danger is even greater in the long term than we currently understand it to be.

I think it is important to note, there is no way to study yourself out of this problem. Second, even as the President claims what they are doing is simply reviewing the bidding and making sort of a further analysis of what the options are, even as they claim that, the fact is the President is taking precipitous and potentially dangerous and clearly counterproductive steps that will have enormous long-term implications for America's ability to resolve the challenge of climate change.

To underscore this point, the National Academy of Sciences, at the request of the White House, issued a report last week assessing our understanding of climate change. In addition to reaffirming the scientific consensus that climate change is underway and getting worse, the National Academy of Sciences made an extraordinarily relevant observation:

National policy decisions made now and in the long-term future will influence the extent of any damage suffered by vulnerable human populations and ecosystems later in this century.

Indeed, since the earliest days of the administration, the President has made a series of policy decisions that will profoundly impact our ability to protect the global environment, all the while purporting to be simply studying the issue.

So it is really clear that while the President says they are going to study it, that he has asked for his Cabinet review, and while the President says there are certain unknowns that impact the choices we will make, the President is not neutral in the choices he is making which will have a long-term impact on the choices with which we are left with respect to this issue.

Specifically, while the administration claims to be studying the issue, the President has repeatedly questioned the underlying science of climate change and attempted to reignite the debate over whether the threat is real. This was done despite the fact of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, a scientific panel founded at the behest of his own father; despite earlier assessments by the National Academy of Sciences; and despite some top government and university researchers in this Nation; and despite personal statements of concern from researchers around the country.

Let me just refer to today's New York Times where there is an article

that says, "Warming Threat Requires Action Now, Scientists Say." I will just read very quickly:

Indeed, to many experts embroiled in the climate debate, the question of how much warming is too much—which has been at the center of international climate negotiations for a decade—now constitutes a red herring. They say it is more important to start from the point of widest agreement—that rising concentrations of heat-trapping gases are warming the atmosphere, and that adding a lot more is probably a bad idea. The next step, they say, is to adopt policies that will soon flatten the rising arc on graphs of global emissions while also pursuing more research to clarify the risks.

Many note that recent studies suggest a fairly high risk of significant ecological harm from a global temperature rise of less than 1 degree Fahrenheit and of substantial coastal flooding and agricultural disruption if temperatures rise more than 4 or 5 degrees in the new century.

Global temperatures have risen 1 degree Fahrenheit in the last 50 years; since the last Ice Age, they have risen about 9 degrees.

The risks are clear enough to justify some investments now in emissions controls, they say.

They say that the general quandary is no different from the kind faced by town officials who must judge how much road salt to buy based on uncertain long-term winter weather forecasts, or by countries deciding whether to invest in a missile defense system that might not ever have to shoot down a missile.

"It's silly to expect that we can resolve what the future is going to be," said Dr. Roger A. Pielke Jr., a mathematician and political scientist at the National Center for Atmospheric Research in Boulder, Colo. "That's like trying to do economic policy by asking competing economists what level the stock market is going to be at 20 years from now."

Yesterday, I was in Boston with a number of extraordinary scientists, among them the Nobel laureate who helped discover the ozone hole, Dr. Jim McCarthy, a professor of biology at Harvard University, and a member of the IPCC working group. He said, imagine yourself as a parent and somebody says to you as a parent: Look, there is a 50-percent chance that your child is going to get cancer from the water he or she has been drinking. But if your child takes this medicine, we know we can reduce the risk. If you don't take the medicine, perhaps your child is going to get the cancer.

Most parents in this country will make the judgment immediately: I want the medicine for my child.

That is exactly the kind of analogy we face today with respect to global warming. We are being told what the probabilities are, about what the consequences will be. We are being told if we take certain actions, we can mitigate it. And we know to a certainty if we do not take those actions, we run the risk that we could wind up with a completely irreversible equation.

We are not talking about something you can suddenly jump in on at some stage later and necessarily remediate—unless, of course, there may be some extraordinary discovery about how you take out of the atmosphere what we are putting into it. But as of this mo-

ment, that remains the most perplexing and complex of solutions at which scientists are looking.

It is far easier and far more attainable to take measures now to try to reduce the level of emissions that we put into the atmosphere and to premitigate, to take the opportunity to reduce and not even do the damage we will do in the first place.

The reason this is particularly compelling is very simple. We know the progressive possibilities, and we recognize there is sort of a law of safety, if you will; sort of a prudent person principle that you would put in place in order to try to avoid a disaster that you may not have any capacity to undo at some point in the future.

We may never know the exact rate of change or the specific impacts and precise human contribution until it is too late to do anything about it. The changes we are causing in the atmosphere, raising atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations to levels unseen in over 400,000 years, is simply unprecedented. Those who demand that we wait for absolute certainty, starting with the President, should explain how they will reverse the damage that we have caused, how our environment can be made whole again once we have polluted the atmosphere in such a substantial and fundamental way.

Rather than asking us the question, how do you know what the damage will be, when you know that you will create damage, we should be asking them the question, how can you guarantee us that it will not cause the worst scenario that is being predicted. It seems to me the precautionary principle demands we take some kind of actions.

Furthermore, while the administration claims to be only studying the issue, the President has actually reversed the campaign pledge and announced a newfound opposition to capping carbon pollution from power plants, which is the source of one-third of our greenhouse gas emissions.

The idea of a four-pollutant power plant bill has been a bipartisan effort in the Congress. It has industry support. It remains one of our most promising proposals to move ahead in climate change. But it was rejected out of hand by the President only weeks after entering office.

That is not a neutral position. That is not merely studying. That is taking a proactive negative position that has an impact on global climate change.

Further, while the administration claims to be only studying the issue, the President declared the Kyoto Protocol on climate change to be dead, and still calls the agreement fatally flawed. That is not only studying the issue; that is not a neutral action.

That has a profoundly negative impact on global efforts to try to deal with climate change. Whatever one thinks of the substance of the Kyoto Protocol, it is self-evident that the

President's outright rejection of the protocol so quickly with little explanation and with little international consultation, and apparently little considered analysis, was a mistake.

Is the protocol flawed? Yes. Is it fatally flawed? That depends entirely on the willingness of an administration to lead and to fix it.

The President in his Rose Garden statement yesterday referred to the 95-0 vote of the Senate on the Byrd-Hagel amendment as a rationale to say the Senate, as a whole, doesn't believe in this treaty. I was the floor manager on our side for that amendment. I know precisely what the intent was, at least on our side of the aisle, in adopting that amendment. It wasn't that the treaty was so flawed that it couldn't ultimately be made whole and become the instrument which we could ratify with amendment, with further nurturing and with future leadership. We were suggesting that, indeed, it would be wrong to do it without the less developed nations also participating.

The Clinton administration set out over the course of the last 2 years to work with these less developed nations to bring them into the process. That is the unfinished task of the Kyoto Protocol. But it should not allow somebody to define the protocol as automatically dead as a consequence of that kind of deficiency.

In the 17 years I have been in the Congress, and the many years many others have been here longer, there have been countless numbers of treaties that have come to us that we have remedied, that we have put amendments to, and that we have gone back and renegotiated on in order to guarantee they meet our concerns.

This protocol is the product of the work of 160 nations. It is a decade of work. It deserves better than to simply be cast aside by a unilateral action of the United States, particularly in view of the fact that it represents, ultimately, the format on which we are going to have to agree, which is an international agreement to have a mandatory goal which we are going to try to reach together in order to deal with this issue.

While the administration claims to be only studying the issue, the President has proposed a budget to us that slashes Federal support for clean energy technologies, which are a vital component of any plan to mitigate climate change.

The President's budget cuts funding in almost every efficiency program at the Department of Energy, including cuts to appliances, buildings, instruments, and transportation. It cuts support for renewable energy from wind, solar, geothermal, and biomass by about 50 percent—a 50-percent cut. That is not a mere study.

That is a negative action that will have a profound negative impact on the ability of our country to be a willing global leader in developing the technologies and in showing the world our seriousness of purpose in this endeavor.

While the administration claims to be only studying the issue, the President issued an energy plan that by his own acknowledgment does not consider the threat of global climate change. It resurrects an energy policy better suited for the 1970s than the year 2000 and the new millennium. It does more to set limits on America's ability to innovate than it does to inspire the technological advances that can help our economy and our environment.

By one estimate, the President's budget and efforts will increase our greenhouse gas pollution by as much as 35 percent. That is not a neutral, mere study. That is a negative action that will have profound long-term consequences.

Let me read again the crucial observation by the National Academy of Sciences. They said:

National policy decisions made now and in the longer term future will influence the extent of any damage suffered by vulnerable human populations and ecosystems later in the century.

With all due respect, I think the President has acted and is acting on the issue of climate change in a counterproductive way. I urge him to take the time to reevaluate that budget and to assist us in setting this country on a course of leadership that will help us to prove our bona fides with respect to this issue.

None of us who argue for action are going to suggest that we have all the answers to what is going to happen in the long run. We recognize there are complex environmental, economic, scientific, and diplomatic challenges. But I do know that we need American leadership in order to convince the people we have been working with for the last 10 years that we are, indeed, serious about this issue.

One of the principal reasons we have been unable to bring the less developed countries into this process is because they do not trust us. They do not believe we are serious about this. In the meetings in Buenos Aires, and in the meetings in The Hague most recently, one could not just hear but you could feel the growing anger at the United States for the level of our emissions; and, then, of course, the lack of action that we have taken to try to deal with this challenge.

I simply remind my colleagues that all of the prophecies of a damaging impact on our economy need to be measured against what a lot of big businesses in our country are already doing. British Petroleum will reduce voluntarily its emissions to 10 percent below the 1990 levels by the year 2010. Polaroid will cut its emissions to 20 percent below the 1994 levels by 2005. Johnson & Johnson will reduce its emissions to 7 percent below the 1990 levels by 2010. IBM will cut emissions by 4 percent each year until 2004 based on 1994 emissions. Shell International, DuPont, and others, have made similar commitments. But the predictions of economic calamity from entrenched

polluters are simply not credible when you measure them against the accomplishment of these particular companies.

The problem is that only a small universe of these companies have been willing to adopt any kind of voluntary effort. We applaud their leadership. That is the kind of good corporate citizenship that makes an enormous difference.

The lesson of the last 10 years is you have to have a mandatory structure and a mandatory goal. You can have all kinds of flexible mechanisms. You can use the marketplace in countless numbers of ways to encourage different kinds of behavior. Indeed, we should ask the corporate community to come to the table in ways that they haven't been invited previously and ask them to be part of helping us define the least cost, least intrusive, most efficient ways of dealing with this issue. But unless we set that kind of goal, we are not going to have the credibility to create the framework within which you bring the less developed nations into our fold.

Our country has proven its remarkable capacity when challenged to be able to apply the entrepreneurial skill and the remarkable entrepreneurial spirit of our Nation to accomplishing almost any task. We did that in the measure of World War II when we needed to pursue the Manhattan project and developed the atom bomb itself. We have done it in countless other ways. It is when we unleash our technological capacity that we are at our best. But many times we have to excite the private capital movement to some of those areas by creating the incentives or by encouraging that capital to move those ways. When you slash your budget significantly in ways that reduces that technological organization, you send a counterproductive message to the capital markets which diminish the ability of that spirit to take hold.

I believe we should summon our energy to the effort of challenging our country to, in a sense, view this as sort of a new mission to the Moon, that this should be our effort, that we are going to do the following in the following period of time. We can achieve that by cutting emissions at home. We can commit to drafting an international agreement that is based on these mandatory caps. We can find all kinds of ways to excite achievement to create hybrid cars, alternative fuels, renewable energy, and I think in the end that would be beneficial for all of us.

While the protocol that was created in Kyoto is incomplete, it also represents a remarkable process because it created this mandatory structure. I think most of us would be willing to acknowledge that there is still room for compromise; that we could find the ways through the emissions trading and through the definition of the carbon sinks and other things to be able to come to a final solution with respect to it.

But we have wasted the past decade in a political impasse, and we have failed to do what I think we know how to do best. If we do pursue what I just talked about—providing the economic incentives for the development and proliferation of solar, wind, biomass, hydrogen, and other clean technologies—then we can carry a new message to the rest of the world that takes away the regressive record of the last years and reasserts a kind of credibility that is important to the negotiating process.

I might add, everyone should understand this is not just about global warming. People are always talking about the confrontation between the environment and the economy. But the fact is, we can create tens of thousands of jobs pursuing these alternatives. In addition to that, we would have wide-ranging domestic benefits, including reduced local air and water pollution, preventing respiratory and other illnesses. All you have to do is look at the incidence of child respiratory disease in our country, the increase in the incidence of asthma, including in adults, the remarkable increase in our hospital costs as a consequence of air pollution- and water pollution-carried diseases and illnesses.

We would lessen our dependence on imported oil. We would lessen the pressure to exploit our own natural lands. We would create markets for farmers. We would grow jobs and exports in the energy sector. We would enhance our overall economic strength by strengthening our technological sector. And we would ultimately strengthen our national security as a consequence of these measures.

Those are not small accomplishments, let alone what we would accomplish with respect to global warming. So we have a challenge in front of us. We need to recognize we have been going backwards. We are at 1980 levels in automobiles because of the loophole on SUVs. There are countless numbers of things we could do on building efficiencies in America, countless numbers of things we could do for various engines and air-conditioners, and other emitters of greenhouse gases, if we were to try to apply the technological capacity of our country to that endeavor.

So my hope is this administration will recognize the energy study done 2 years ago which said that if we were to try to implement what we know we can do today—what IBM, Polaroid, and these other companies are doing today—we could, in fact, do so in a way that is completely neutral to our economy. We could have the upside of gains on addressing global warming while having the upside on our economy.

We should begin with steps that benefit the environment and the economy and are technologically achievable today. We can and should increase the efficiency of automobiles, homes, buildings, appliances and manufacturing.

The efficiency of the average American passenger vehicle has been declining since 1987 and is now at its lowest since 1980. That is unacceptable. Our cars and trucks could and should be increasingly more efficient not less efficient. Despite doubling auto efficiency since 1975, we are actually now backsliding. It is time to update national standards for vehicle efficiency. It is time to get more efficient gasoline, diesel, natural gas, hybrid and fuel cell vehicles off the drawing board and onto America's highways. We can do it. We are doing it. Hybrids, once considered exotic, are on the market today getting 50 miles to a gallon.

We can improve the efficiency of residential and commercial buildings. I am a cosponsor of the Energy Efficient Buildings Incentives Act. It is a bipartisan proposal to provide tax incentives for efficiency improvements in new and existing buildings. Once implemented it would cut carbon emissions by over 50 million metric tons per year by 2010 and provide a direct economic savings that will exceed \$40 billion.

We can strengthen efficiency standards for clothes washers, refrigerators, heat pumps, air conditioners and other appliances. Standards issued in 1997 and earlier this year by the Department of Energy must be fully and effectively implemented. The net energy savings to the nation will be \$27 billion by 2030. The environmental benefits include a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions equal to taking more than 14 million cars off the road.

We must push the deployment of domestic, reliable and renewable energy from wind, solar, biomass and geothermal by creating markets and providing financial incentives. Today, California gets 12 percent of its energy from renewable energy while the rest of the country gets less than 2 percent of its electricity from renewable energy. We need to do a better job. Our nation has great potential for wind power—not only in states like North Dakota, South Dakota or Iowa but also in coastal states like Massachusetts. Planning is underway for an offshore wind farm off the coast of Massachusetts that will be generating as much as 400 megawatts of power—enough to power 400,000 homes.

We have only begun to tap the potential of geothermal in Western states and biomass, which can produce energy from farm crops, forest products and waste. But to seize this potential we must create the markets and financial incentives that will draw investment, invention and entrepreneurship. Unfortunately, America is falling behind. One of the challenges in wind development is long delays in purchasing equipment from European suppliers who have the best technologies but also long delays because of rapidly growing demand. I believe American companies should be the technological leaders supplying American projects—instead it's European firms. We must create the market and the incentives

for these technologies and let America's entrepreneurs meet the demand.

Finally, we must look to the long term. If we are ever to convince the developing world that there is a better way, we must create that better way. To do so, we must invest in solving this problem with the same urgency that we have invested in space exploration, military technology and other national priorities. For too long our investments have been scatter shot and poorly coordinated—and lacked the intensity we need. We need a single effort, with strong leadership, that investigates how we meet this challenge and sets a path for a sustainable future.

If we do this, if we act early and invest in the future, I am confident our investment will be rewarded. It will bolster our economy, make us more energy independent, protect the public health and strengthen our national security. Unlike today, America will be the leader in clean energy technologies and we will export them to the world. As America has throughout our history, we will lead in finding a global solution—and we will protect the global environment for generations to come.

That is the challenge. I hope the Senate and House will show leadership in engaging in that effort.

I thank the Chair and I thank everybody else in delaying a little bit. I yield the floor.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now stand in recess until the hour of 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, at 1:04 p.m., the Senate recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. NELSON of Florida).

BETTER EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS ACT—Continued

AMENDMENT NO. 536

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I yield 10 minutes to the Senator from Connecticut.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I thank my friend from New Hampshire.

I rise this afternoon to express my support for the amendment offered by my colleague from New Hampshire which would create a Federal private school choice demonstration project. This amendment closely tracks choice proposals that I have cosponsored myself, both with Senator GREGG and, before him, with Senator Coats of Indiana.

This is an experimental program. It is designed to test an idea that can help some of our children get a better education. It is focused exclusively on