

to get there. This is real. This isn't about mere statistics. If we can't power our economy, how can people feed their children and families?

Let me talk about risk for a moment. We have had people come on the floor and say we can't risk the beaches. However, in reality there is minimal risk. As the senior Senator from Louisiana pointed out, there is minimal risk associated with drilling. There is more risk from the possibility of oil spills when tankers have to transport the oil to our country.

This amendment, and others like it, will not decrease the risk, it will increase the risk because we will have more tankers coming into this Nation. The environmental leaders should be strong enough in this Nation to stand up and admit this fact.

There are also other risks to consider. The risk of a recession. I want the President to know I strongly disagree with his decision to modify this lease sale. He should have held his ground. We should be exploring for oil and gas in this entire lease sale area as originally proposed. If we do not supply states such as Ohio, California, Illinois or Louisiana, with the oil and natural gas to generate the power they need, we risk jeopardizing the economic future for our Nation. So if we are going to talk about risk, let's not just talk about environmental risk, let's talk about other risks to this Nation.

Another important risk to consider is that of our national security. The risk of our dependence on oil from the Mid-east is well known. I don't mean to be overly dramatic, but I want this Senate to know that this is not just a fight between Alabama and Florida or a fight between Louisiana and Florida; this is involves the entire country. I urge my colleagues to vote against this amendment.

Let me talk about a more parochial issue as a Senator from Louisiana. We are proud of the contribution we have made to the oil and gas production in this country. However, the people in Louisiana also want a clean environment. The industry that operates off our coast has made great strides in making sure we can produce the oil and gas necessary to support the electricity needs of this nation while doing so in an environmentally responsible manner.

Louisiana and other gulf coast States have argued for some time now that if we are going to continue to drill in the central and western gulf there should be reasonable compensation not only for the environmental impact, but also for the infrastructure necessary to produce this oil and gas that is crucial to our nation.

Louisiana, Alabama, Mississippi, Texas and other States are asking to share more equitably in the revenues that are produced from this offshore development. Currently, if \$2 billion in royalties is collected from production in the Gulf of Mexico, all of it goes into the Federal Treasury and is being

spent in a variety of different ways. However, the states that permit production off their shores should be compensated fairly for their contribution to the nation as well as the impacts they incur. Whatever we decide and however we can come to terms, as reasonable people can agree, I hope one thing we will agree on is that, because interior States get to keep 50 percent of the revenues from development in their states, the States that are serving as a platform for offshore production will be fairly compensated as well.

In conclusion, we do not want to drive this industry off the shores of our Nation to other places in the world. We need a viable industry here for economic as well as national security reasons.

I urge my colleagues to vote against this amendment. With all due respect to my good friend, the Senator from Florida, this is not the right direction in which to lead our Nation.

I yield back the remainder of my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader is recognized.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, this is not related to the issue at hand, although I want to speak on that under whatever time I am yielded. This is under leader time on a resolution. I believe Senator DASCHLE will be joining me momentarily. We want to be sure to do this when we both can be here.

COMMENDING GARY SISCO FOR HIS SERVICE AS SECRETARY OF THE SENATE

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 127, which is at the desk, and ask that the resolution be read in total.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 127) commending Gary Sisco for his service as Secretary of the Senate:

S. RES. 127

Whereas, Gary Sisco faithfully served the Senate of the United States as the 29th Secretary of the Senate from the 104th to the 107th Congress, and discharged the difficult duties and responsibilities of that office with unfailing dedication and a high degree of competence and efficiency; and

Whereas, as an elected officer, Gary Sisco has upheld the high standards and traditions of the United States Senate and extended his assistance to all Members of the Senate; and

Whereas, through his exceptional service and professional integrity as an officer of the Senate of the United States, Gary Sisco has earned the respect, trust, and gratitude of his associates and the Members of the Senate: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate recognizes the notable contributions of Gary Sisco to the Senate and to his Country and expresses to him its deep appreciation for his faithful and outstanding service, and extends its very best wishes in his future endeavors.

SEC. 2. The Secretary of the Senate shall transmit a copy of this resolution to Gary Sisco.

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

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 127) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I wanted the entire resolution to be read in the RECORD because I did want a complete record of the appreciation of the entire Senate for Gary Sisco who has served so capably over the past 5 years as the Secretary of the Senate.

I appreciate Senator DASCHLE joining me for this time because he knows, as I know, that we have some very dedicated officers of the Senate and other employees of our floor staff who put in long hours and do a great job in making this institution function the way it should. We do not say thank you enough to those who serve in the Chamber with us who make it possible for us to do our job, and we do not say thank you enough to the officers of the Senate, people such as the Secretary of the Senate, the Sergeant at Arms, the Chaplain, and others who work every day to help make this place function.

I have a very personal warm feeling for Gary Sisco. He is from Tennessee. He was born in Bolivar, TN, a small town. He grew up in strictly a blue-collar family. I believe his father did serve for a period of time as sheriff in that county in Tennessee.

I got to know him way back in, I guess, 1962 or 1963 at the University of Mississippi. We became friends. I managed to even talk him into joining the fraternity to which I belonged. We developed a very close friendship.

He wound up having a blind date with his now wife, thanks to the arrangement of my wife, Mary Sue Sisco is from Pascagoula, MS.

He went on to work with IBM after graduation and was involved in gubernatorial campaigns in Tennessee. He served Gov. Lamar Alexander, and then wound up in Washington and worked for Congressman Robin Beard as his administrative assistant. He worked for Howard Baker reaching the position of executive assistant. He then returned to Tennessee and had a very successful business life.

Five years ago, I called on him and said: We need somebody who understands computers, somebody who understands how to manage a pretty good size operation, somebody who knows how to keep the books straight, somebody who has political instinct and knows and loves the Senate. You are the man.

He left his business in Nashville, TN, and came to Washington and has been in the position of Secretary of the Senate for 5 years. He has done a wonderful job.

The only thing I ever asked of him was: Gary, when we have a few things

that need to be changed, need to be approved, let's just make sure when you leave and I leave the position I am in, it is better than it was when we got here.

I believe Gary Sisco has achieved that goal. To show you the kind of man he is, Senator DASCHLE had agreed, frankly, that the officers of the Senate could stay on through this session of Congress, even though the majority might change. So I know he would have kept his word and Gary could have stayed, but he submitted his resignation, and I agreed that I think the majority leader should have officers of the Senate of his selection. It was the right thing to do, but it was his idea; it was not mine.

Senator DASCHLE has been very gracious in the way he has treated the employees in the Office of the Secretary of the Senate. He has selected an outstanding, capable, experienced person and one who also understands the Senate very well, Jeri Thomson. I know she will continue the great legacy Gary Sisco has built.

To my colleagues in the Senate, I thank them all for the courtesies and support they have given to Gary Sisco, and I wish my friend the very best in his next career.

Some of us, as Senator DASCHLE and myself, have been in the Congress for many, many years now, in my case 28 years. I have to confess, in a way, I am a little envious of a guy who was in the business sector, in the political arena, in the congressional arena, back in the business world, back in the Senate arena, and is now going out to the next stage of his life. I am sure it will be an outstanding one.

I, again, extend my best wishes to Gary Sisco, his wife Mary Sue, and their children. I know they will always have a special feeling in their hearts for the Senate, and I believe the Senate also has that feeling for them.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, first, I compliment the distinguished minority leader on his remarks. I appreciate very much the opportunity to address the resolution this afternoon.

Five years ago, Gary Sisco came to Washington and came to the job as Secretary of the Senate with the full confidence of then-majority leader TRENT LOTT. Today he leaves the Senate, leaves his job as Secretary of the Senate, having earned the full confidence of now-majority leader TOM DASCHLE.

That did not just happen because he had the title. It happened because he worked at it. It happened because, in spite of the long tradition that he had of working for very able Members of the Senate on the Republican side in the Senate and the House and Governor, he came leaving his Republican credentials at home. He came working with us as Democrats and Republicans, equally serving his country and serving this institution as ably as anyone can.

As Senator LOTT has noted, the mark of a good and able public servant is one who leaves his job in a better position than when he came. I can say without equivocation Gary Sisco has met that test. It has been my pleasure to work with him. I have come to admire him and respect him, and I also respect the position he has taken with regard to this particular resignation.

I confirm exactly what Senator LOTT has just noted, that because of my respect, not only for Senator LOTT but for Gary Sisco and the Sergeant at Arms, it was my view, in keeping the continuity of the officers of the Senate, as well as because they were serving us so well, they had every right and could have every expectation that regardless of what may happen to the majority in the Senate, they would have the full confidence and have the full support of both caucuses for the duration of this Congress.

Gary Sisco has made his decision, and I respect it, but I do so with a great deal of appreciation. I do so with the hope that he will come back often. I do so with a realization that in this business we get to work with quality people, people who give back to their country, to their community, and to each of us in ways that I think is admirable. He has done so. Our country owes him a debt of gratitude. This Senate owes him a debt of gratitude.

On behalf of our caucus, I thank him for all he has given us. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, again, I thank Senator DASCHLE for coming to the Chamber and making that statement, and I look forward to working with him and the new Secretary of the Senate to continue the very efficient and fine way the Senate has been conducted, in the way the Office of the Secretary of the Senate has been run. I know she will do a great job.

Mr. President, I do not know who is controlling the time now, but I want to be yielded time to speak against the pending amendment.

Several Senators addressed the Chair.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, will the majority leader yield for 1 minute to comment on Mr. Sisco?

Mr. LOTT. I will be happy to do so.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader is recognized.

Mr. LOTT. I yield to Senator SESSIONS from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I thank the Republican leader and the Democratic leader and others for their kind comments about Gary Sisco.

In short, he is one of the finest people I know. He served the Senate with great integrity, ability, and fidelity. He has a wonderful family, high personal values, the kind of person you like to know, like to call your friend, you want to have in your home. He has served so well, and he leaves with grace and style quite in harmony with his whole lifestyle. I thank Senator LOTT

for raising this point, and I join in his compliments.

Mr. LOTT. I believe the time has been off the leader time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is correct.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2002—Continued

AMENDMENT NO. 893

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I rise to speak against the pending amendment. My question is, If we are not going to have exploration in the Gulf of Mexico in a limited area for oil and gas, where are we going to do it? Not in the Atlantic along the coast. Not in the Pacific along the coast. Some people say not in Alaska in the area that has been pursued. Then where? I believe we can do it effectively, efficiently, responsibly, and productively in the Gulf of Mexico.

For years, exploration in the gulf and, in fact, drilling activity occurred primarily in Texas and Louisiana waters. But in more recent years it has moved over under Mississippi and Alabama. It has been very productive.

This is an interesting map to which others have referred. The Florida coastline goes to Pensacola, Alabama with Mobile, Biloxi, and New Orleans. I live right here; that is where my house sits. I can step off my front porch and put a rock in the Gulf of Mexico. I can sit out on my front porch and I can see a natural gas well working right in this area. In the daytime you can see it. It is clear. And at night sometimes they flare it off. It has never been a problem and it is producing natural gas. As a matter of fact, it is closer to my front doorstep, literally, than it is to Panama City, Florida, or Pensacola, or Biloxi or New Orleans. I am perfectly comfortable with this. There is no risk.

Those who live in the gulf area know that some of the most effective drilling and exploration drilling anywhere in the world is done in the gulf. It has become more efficient, with greater accuracy. If there has ever been a spill in the gulf, it must have been very minor and certainly never affected my State, I don't believe, since we have had the drilling off the coast of Alabama and Mississippi. I don't believe we have ever had one.

It also is a wonderful place to fish around the oil rigs. We take old liberty ships out and sink them in the gulf so they will form fishing mounds. It is very effective. The rig serves the same purpose.

But now we have people who say we should not have it in the Gulf of Mexico, or we should delay it even further, even though there has been a compromise. I think this whole area should be opened up for lease. But now it is down to just this green area, a very small area. The Governors of the States that are involved—Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and I believe this compromise provision is supported even by Jeb Bush—all of our leaders