

But I don't want to belabor this because what we are attempting to do is move this process along and bring up the other amendments. We are certainly not looking to extend the debate on the issue or filibuster this bill through unlimited amendments.

Currently, as I have indicated, there are roughly 150 known potential amendments remaining—roughly 100 on the Democratic side and 50 on the Republican side. Virtually all of them could and would have been dealt with within the committee process. But the staff for both the majority and the minority are working to eliminate this list.

I pledge my support to improve the legislation before us and get a bill to the President as soon as possible. I urge my colleagues to recognize the weight of this task before us as we push through the agenda and do what is right for the Nation.

I hope that as we start afresh after our Easter recess we can come together and recognize the reality that this country is in peril over energy, that the continued escalation of prices is going to hit the consumer and hit our recovery, the prospects associated with the curtailment of imports from Venezuela and Iraq, which constitute 30 percent of our oil imports, and the results of nearly 2 million barrels coming to a halt which we have depended on is going to severely affect our economic recovery.

It has been estimated for every million barrels of oil taken off the world market, crude oil prices rise roughly \$3 per barrel. Today's price is roughly \$27. Obviously, we are looking at somewhere between \$30 and \$33 if, indeed, this curtailment continues.

It is time to recognize that indeed we have some recourse. The recourse is to reduce our dependence, and one way to do that is obviously to look favorably upon the ANWR amendment.

I thank the Chair and my colleagues for the time. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

CHERRY BLOSSOM QUEEN ELIZABETH O'CONNOR

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, my colleague from Connecticut is joining me on the floor, and we are going to spend a couple minutes talking about two sources of State pride. I will very briefly mention, before I talk about the University of Connecticut women's basketball team, that last Friday night the U.S. Cherry Blossom Queen was crowned in Washington. We are very proud in my office to say Elizabeth O'Connor was chosen, by a random selection process, as the Cherry Blossom Queen of the United States.

She is a staff assistant in my office. She is a wonderful young woman who is very accomplished in many ways. A summa cum laude graduate of Notre Dame University from Farmington, CT, she went to Farmington High

School. She is the daughter of wonderful parents, Fred and Katherine O'Connor in Farmington, CT.

She will be going to Japan for a couple of weeks, meeting with the Prime Minister, the Speaker of the House, as the Cherry Blossom Queen of the United States.

You can understand the source of pride in our office and in Connecticut that Elizabeth has been chosen as Connecticut's society princess crowned the Cherry Blossom Queen. We are very proud of her. I know she will represent the State and the country very admirably. In the last few years we had another queen, Shannon Kula of my office, also chosen the Cherry Blossom Queen. People are beginning to wonder if Connecticut has some fix, a hold on the cherry blossom queen festival. Nothing such as that has occurred. This is good fortune and good luck for the State of Connecticut.

NCAA WOMEN'S BASKETBALL CHAMPIONS

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I rise today, along with my friend and colleague, Senator LIEBERMAN, to offer a Senate resolution commending the Connecticut women's basketball team. We have had a phenomenal season from start to finish, with the crowning victory at the Alamodome in Texas, defeating the University of Oklahoma just a few weeks ago. Their 82-to-70 victory in the national championship game on March 31 capped one of the most dominant seasons enjoyed by any sports team in recent memory.

The Huskie Women's Basketball Team finished the season undefeated, 39 and 0, becoming only the fourth women's NCAA basketball team in history to do so and one of a few teams that have had multiple national championships. There are only a handful that have had undefeated seasons and national championships.

The margin of victory of the UConn team over the season was astounding. A historical 35 points was the average margin of victory in the 39 victories they had during the regular season. In all my years—I know the Presiding Officer is a fan as well of sports and basketball—I never have seen anything quite like this. Each game was not a question of whether or not they would win but by how much. A phenomenal group of young women, a phenomenal coaching staff, they just did a terrific job during the entire season.

The accomplishments of this team go far beyond their dominance on the hard court. The Huskies have helped contribute to the greater cause of increasing the visibility of women athletes. Nearly 3.5 million people watched the final game on ESPN, which represented the largest audience for a college basketball game, men's or women's, in network history. Imagine, a few years ago, you would have been lucky to have a handful of people that might show up for a women's basketball game.

Not only did they have 3.5 million people watching on television, 30,000 people were packed into the Alamodome to watch the final game. Many people would have predicted that could never have happened only a few years ago. Why shouldn't it be so? Anyone who watched this remarkable team from Connecticut as well as the other top teams across the Nation—Tennessee, Duke, Oklahoma; there are a lot of great women's teams, the number growing each and every year—would certainly be impressed with the quality of the play they have brought to the game.

Theirs is a wonderful, pure style of basketball combining accurate shooting and flashy passing, as we have all seen, and sound all-around play. For the women's team, one of the strengths was the senior leadership. NCAA Player of the Year Sue Bird, along with her senior teammates Asjha Jones, Tamika Williams, and Swin Cash, have played together for 4 years—four remarkable women.

This last victory caps an incredible collegiate career for these four women, including an unbelievable 136-and-9 record and two national championships—rather phenomenal. Throughout the season, their familiarity with each other made it seem as though they could read each other's minds as they played on the court.

All of us in Connecticut are deeply proud. Last Saturday, there was a parade in Hartford, CT. Literally thousands of people on a bitterly cold day showed up to express their admiration and pride in these wonderful players and their coaches.

Coach Geno Auriemma is truly a special individual and deserves some very special recognition. He has led this team to victory after victory and does so with a great deal of style, emotion, and feeling for these young women. He arrived on the Storrs campus in 1985, at which time the Huskie team had experienced only one winning season. He quickly turned the program into one of the leading powerhouses in the Nation, and the pride of the people of Connecticut has been swelling ever since.

Coach Auriemma has compiled over 400 career wins at UConn including an unbelievable 272-and-17 record over the last 8 seasons. This represents a run of dominance possibly unmatched in the history of team sports competition. Under Coach Auriemma's leadership, the Huskies have won 3 national titles, 12 Big East regular season titles, and 11 Big East tournament titles. This year, Coach Auriemma was named National Coach of the Year for the fourth time in his career and the Big East Coach of the Year for the fifth time in his career.

Perhaps the most important example of Coach Auriemma's philosophy is the way he has led these women to be winners on the court and off as well. I know the Presiding Officer will be impressed by this statistic. Coach Auriemma has overseen a program that

boasts a 100-percent graduation rate for the young women of his team. That is something to be emulated across the country. The entire sports world could learn a great deal from Coach Auriemma and his staff and the generation of UConn women's players who have played for him. Athletes do not need to sacrifice an education or other valuable things in life for the sake of winning. If you set your sights on excellence, there is no telling how much you can achieve in life and where excellence will come in every endeavor in which you engage.

Although some Huskies have gone on to excel in the WNBA, many others have gone on to careers as physicians, lawyers, and educators. I know Coach Auriemma is extremely proud of the alumni association that has come from the teams he has coached over the years.

Let me also congratulate everyone involved in this incredible season. I mentioned the four seniors on the team: Sue Bird; Swin Cash; Diana Taurasi, a young woman, not a senior. She was the most junior in age of the starting five. I mentioned Asjha Jones and Tamika Williams. The starting five is the only team in NCAA history where all five starting players are All-Americans. Sue Bird was on the first team, two were on the second team, one on the third team, and one honorable mention. That has never been done before by a starting five on a basketball team. And the other players on the team could easily have been a starting team almost anywhere else, and they contributed successfully to the success and overall efforts. They include: Jessica Moore, Ashley Battle, Maria Conlon, Morgan Valley, Ashley Valley, and Stacey Marron. Thanks go to Geno Auriemma and his associate head coach, Chris Dailey, and Tonya Cardoza and Jamelle Elliott.

Senator LIEBERMAN and I are very proud of this wonderful group of people, these young players. They receive a lot of support around Connecticut. We have always had to export our sports allegiance, on a professional level, and in Connecticut you are either a Boston Red Sox fan or a Yankee fan. Some are now Mets fans. In football, you either support the Giants or the Patriots. In hockey, it is Boston, New York, or New Jersey. At the collegiate level, the UConn men's team, under Jim Calhoun, had a wonderful season, getting to the final eight, losing to Maryland, and the UConn women's team going on to the third national title in the last few years.

While we don't have a professional sports team in our State, we have wonderful college athletics, and you can understand the great sense of pride we all feel over this unique and special accomplishment achieved by the UConn women's basketball team. I know my colleague is here being supportive.

CONGRATULATING THE UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT'S WOMEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM ON WINNING THE NCAA NATIONAL TITLE

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I send to the desk a resolution, S. Res. 232, and ask for its consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 232) congratulating the Huskies of the University of Connecticut for winning the 2002 NCAA Division I women's basketball championship.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CORZINE). Without objection, the Senate will proceed to consider the resolution.

The junior Senator from Connecticut is recognized.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, it is with profound pride—and I suppose I should add provincial pleasure—that I join Senator DODD and all of our colleagues from Connecticut in the House of Representatives in introducing this resolution, which is the legislative equivalent of wagging our tails and howling like huskies at the Capitol dome.

We are very proud to salute the 2002 national champion University of Connecticut women's Huskies basketball team, who, on March 31, capped a 39-to-0 season—a perfect season—the ninth undefeated run in the whole history of college basketball, with a victory over Oklahoma in the title game. I suppose we should pay some respect and give some sense of congratulations, even in defeat, to our former colleague, David Boren, who is now the president of the University of Oklahoma.

This fantastic season leads me to repeat a pressing question that opponents of the UConn women's basketball team must have been asking all year, which is: Who let the Huskies out? I think the answer might be the great Coach Geno Auriemma and his superb staff, who not only coached but led, inspired, and mentored this extraordinary group of women to this extraordinary season. This marks the third time that UConn women have leapt above the rim of college basketball and the first time in NCAA history that any school has gone unbeaten on two separate occasions.

Mr. President, you may remember—and I certainly do—a similar swell of pride when Rebecca Lobo and Jenn Rizzotti and company ran the table on the way to the national championship in 1995. For years to come, student athletes around the Nation will be striving to approach the perfection of this program, and we in Connecticut are so proud of it.

As Senator DODD indicated, five of these great basketball players won All-American notice. They poured in more points than any other team in the Nation and racked up an NCAA record average margin of victory of more than 35

points a game—a remarkable achievement.

But the true measure of the team, as Senator DODD indicated, can't be distilled in numbers or records. You have to look at the humans involved. The legendary Geno Auriemma, one of the winningest coaches in college basketball history, once again brought together a great group of talented and hard-working young women and imbued that team not just with the skills but with the team spirit and the togetherness that we saw on the court perfectly and gracefully executed time and time again.

Senator DODD referred to the four seniors who are legendary and will remain legendary in Connecticut for a long time to come: Sue Bird, Asjha Jones, Tamika Williams, and Swin Cash; and a great sophomore sensation, Diana Taurasi. They became an unstoppable combination. I will say with pride that the surge of success is starting to feel happily familiar to us, and we are very grateful for that. Over the last 4 years, the UConn women's team has gone 136 and 9, made three Final Four appearances, and claimed four Big East tournament titles in 4 years, along with the Huskies men's basketball team, which this year earned its 15th consecutive trip to national post-season play on the way to the Elite Eight. The two make a truly triumphant tandem, that Huskies men or women have now won the national college basketball championship in 1995, 1999, 2000, and 2002.

This is a great program, and we owe a particular thanks and expression of pride to the athletic director of the University of Connecticut, Lou Perkins, to coaches Geno Auriemma and Jim Calhoun, and to all their staffs.

Mr. President, this may give you some small sense of why Connecticut residents are as loyal to our Huskies as huskies are to their owners. We love the way this team came to play. We love the way they brought out the best in our State. If I may say so, as Americans, every day we pledge allegiance to the red, white, and blue; but during basketball season in Connecticut, we have a special place in our hearts for the white and blue alone. We are proud that the rest of the Nation is catching on. A record crowd of nearly 30,000 fans turned out at the Alamodome in San Antonio to watch the Huskies win the national title. That growing popularity is helping women's college basketball ascend to truly new heights.

I am proud to join with Senator DODD and our colleagues in the House in introducing this resolution and in congratulating the UConn players and coaches on their singular accomplishment and asking the Senate to do the same. We are filled with pride over the honor the Huskies have brought to Connecticut.

Two years ago, when Senator DODD and I were here and I was honored to give a similar speech saluting the UConn men's Huskies, I closed with the