increases, 71 percent increases, 43 percent increases? Again, these aren't increases for 1 year, these are increases that my ratepayers are stuck with. They are stuck with them because they signed an Enron contract and because we have a Federal Energy Regulatory Commission that basically says: Yes, they have been manipulated, but we don't care, you still have to pay that rate.

I do not want this to happen to other parts of the country. I don't want to see economies like the Northwest economy, or the west coast economy, which is a critical part of our Nation's economy, suffer the consequences of manipulation of energy prices. The American people, to whom I have to answer when I go home to Washington State, or in other parts of the country if I travel, say to me: How come I am stuck with an 88 percent rate increase? How come I am stuck with a 61 percent rate increase? How come I am losing my job because our company can't afford the high electricity costs? or, How come my school district is paying high electricity rates and we have to pay a higher tuition? How come our school district is asking for a levy because we have higher electricity rates? People are not even taking action on giving us relief.

We will come back at this body on what we should do about past bad actions. But what we need to do tomorrow on the Cantwell market manipulation amendment is say that market manipulation of energy prices is wrong and that an energy title that fails to address these issues is not satisfactory.

I could take the last few minutes I have tonight, of my 1 hour, and tell you six or seven things that are also wrong with the Domenici electricity title. There are lots of schemes in there that run towards a market-based system on regional transmission organization and standard market design that I know my colleagues from the South and parts of the West probably are not too anxious to hear about, aren't too excited that I put in play. The Domenici amendment is a step closer to that.

Why do they want more of a free market? Because they want to see having that free market without the regulatory aspects of the Public Utility Holding Company Act, or having oversight of mergers, or having these kinds of hammers making sure no manipulation takes place. They want to see how much further prices can be manipulated. They want to see how they can have a free rein on what really is a needed utility for the American people.

I think, regarding those RTO and standard market design schemes that are also part of the Domenici underlying amendment, it is the absolutely wrong time to be talking about moving towards more change. We have just had this crisis. My State is still paying for this crisis. We are going to still be paying for it for years.

I understand the President is coming to the Northwest in August. I hope the President has an answer for why his administration, and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, have not dealt with this issue. I hope he has an answer, to say to ratepayers why we should continue to be gouged on this issue; why we in the West, even though contracts have been manipulated, still have to pay those prices.

I would say to him: Mr. President, Washington State has a bright future. It still has a software economy. It still has an aerospace industry. Yes, it has been challenged, but it is still strong. We have a burgeoning biotech industry. We have a huge trade community. We have a vibrant, diverse agricultural economy throughout our State. But none of those can continue to exist with exorbitant energy prices that have been manipulated.

I hope when he comes to Washington State, he has an answer. I can tell you right now, that answer will not be well received if it is about just creating more supply. We are all for creating more supply in Washington State, and we are all for diversifying, but we are not for market manipulation.

We have to think through these other aspects of the Domenici amendment on RTOs, regional transmission organizations, standard market design and the other elements that really do call into question our ability to regulate the cost of electricity, for which the American people count on us. I hate to think, after 70 years of having a similar pyramid scheme push us into having the Public Utility Holding Company Act, that somehow this body will not get the message. Instead of just dealing with this crisis that we have dealt with in electricity—maybe not next year, maybe not in 5 years, but 7 years down the road—we end up having a similar crisis with natural gas, and, instead of just affecting the west coast and Washington ratepayers, it impacts the whole country.

Fair energy prices are part of having a healthy economy. Affordable energy prices help to continue to stimulate economic growth. But manipulated energy prices are not just. They are not reasonable. They are not in the public interest. This body ought to take strong action against them.

I know my colleagues all care about this issue. We wanted to do the right thing on securities law. We wanted to do the right thing on accounting law. It is time, with the Cantwell amendment tomorrow, to do the right thing on making sure that energy market manipulation is prevented and does not happen again.

I yield the floor.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—Executive Calendar

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, as in executive session I ask unanimous consent that at a time to be determined by the majority leader, after consultation with the Democratic leader, the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of Executive Calendar No. 310, the nomination of William H. Pryor, Jr., to be United States Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit; provided further that there then be 4 hours for debate equally divided in the usual form; and that following that debate the Senate proceed to a vote on the confirmation of the nomination with no intervening action or debate; further, that the President then be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I modify my request to allow for 8 hours of debate.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I modify that to ask for 10 hours of debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Ms. CANTWELL. I object, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF WILLIAM H. PRYOR, JR., OF ALABAMA, TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE ELEVENTH CIRCUIT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I now ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of calendar No. 310, and I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of William H. Pryor, Jr., of Alabama, to be United States Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I further ask unanimous consent that the live quorum under Rule XXII be waived.

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

The clerk will report the cloture motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of Rule XXII of the

Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on Executive Calendar No. 310, the nomination of William H. Pryor, Jr., to be United States Circuit Judge for the Eleventh Circuit.

Bill Frist, Orrin Hatch, Ben Nighthorse Campbell, Craig Thomas, Charles Grassley, John Cornyn, Chuck Hagel, Jim Talent, Richard Shelby, Wayne Allard, Elizabeth Dole, Conrad Burns, Larry Craig, Jeff Sessions, Lindsey Graham, Rick Santorum, and Thad Cochran.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate resume legislative session.

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business.

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

JOHN J. HOULIHAN: A LIFETIME OF GIVING

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute a great man, a compassionate public servant, a decorated war hero and a beloved husband, father and grandfather, John J. Houlihan, who died of lung cancer, Thursday, July 24, in his Palos Heights home surrounded by his loving family.

Born in 1923 on Chicago's South Side to the son of a slaughterhouse worker, John Houlihan graduated from Leo High School in 1941. Shortly after the attack on Pearl Harbor in December of that year, John enlisted in the United States Marines. He was shipped to the South Pacific where he saw action in the Battle of Midway.

On his 21st birthday, during a battle on the South Pacific island of Bougainville, he was hit by enemy artillery fire and lost his left leg. John Houlihan was awarded a Purple Heart, the Marine Corps Medal and the Asian Pacific Medal with 3 Bronze Stars.

He spent the next year and a half in Veterans' Administration hospitals recuperating from his wounds and undergoing physical therapy. During that time, a friend persuaded him to attend a church dance in Chicago. It was at that dance that John met his future wife, Vernal. Together they would raise a wonderful family of eight children.

Even while bouncing on crutches, John taught his children how to swim, ride bikes and hit baseballs. He taught them music and the joys of being a Notre Dame football fan. As his daughter Maureen has said, John's children grew up learning the Notre Dame fight song and the Marine Corps hymn.

After leaving the military, John attended DePaul University, where he studied business and accounting, and began working in the Cook County Clerk's office. He later worked in the offices of State Treasurers Jerome Cosentino and Pat Quinn.

A loyal Democrat, John was elected to the Illinois General Assembly in 1965 and served 8 years in the State house, representing the 41st District in the Park Forest area. He was also elected as a delegate to several democratic national conventions. While in the legislature, John started insurance and accounting businesses.

Following his service in the General Assembly, John's attention turned to veterans' rights and veterans' services. He became the first director of the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs when former Governor Dan Walker tapped him to head the fledgling agency. He developed programs for the Veterans' Administration in Washington under former President Jimmy Carter, and most recently was supervisor of the Cook County Veterans Assistance Commission. John spent decades fighting for veterans' rights, winning honors and accolades along the way, including the first-ever Cook County Veterans' Recognition Award in 2000.

Looking over this long list of accomplishments, I think anyone would come to the conclusion that this was a great public servant. But what those of us who knew John will tell you is that he was also a great human being.

Meet John Houlihan just once, the story goes, and he would greet you by name years later. If you were a veteran who needed help, John Houlihan was the man to see. It didn't matter if you were rich or poor, black or white, Democrat or Republican, John Houlihan's door—and his heart—were always open to you.

They say some people are naturals when it comes to politics and public service. Some people have the right temperament, the right personality and the right mix of talents to be a good leader. John certainly had all of those things. But in truth, John had something that distinguished him from the crowd—a passion to help others and to make sure they got a fair shake. A passion for life and a belief that giving of yourself in the service of others was the highest calling.

John Houlihan gave completely of himself on the battlefields in the South Pacific; in the legislative fights on the House floor in Springfield; in VA hospitals and service centers all across Illinois and the rest of the Nation; and every day to his wife and his children and his grandchildren.

Mother Teresa, the late Roman Catholic nun and missionary, once said: ''We do no great things—we do only small things with great love.'' John Houlihan knew that. He showed us with his life. He will be greatly missed.

SINGAPORE SHOULD INCREASE PRESSURE ON BURMA

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I do not intend to delay consideration of the U.S.-Singapore free-trade agreement, but I do want to take a moment to highlight a significant step that Singapore can take today to further the cause of freedom in Burma.

It has been reported, by U.N. Special Envoy Razali Ismail and others, that the repressive and illegitimate State Peace and Development Council, SPDC, has assets tucked away in Singapore financial institutions. Given the many illicit activities of the SPDC, one can rightfully question the source of these funds.

Like the United States, Singapore should immediately freeze the SPDC's assets until such time that democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi and other all democrats are freed from detention and a process of national reconciliation is agreed to and implemented by all parties—the National League for Democracy, ethnic nationalities, and the SPDC.

Such action not only underscores Singapore's commitment to the rule of law throughout the region, but places much needed pressure on the junta in Rangoon to change their oppressive ways.

Southeast Asian countries can no longer ignore the many threats to regional stability posed by the generals in Burma. The situation in Burma should be a matter of concern to all of Burma's neighbors—and the U.N. Security Council.

MAKING IT EASIER FOR BAD APPLE GUN DEALERS

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, last week I spoke about a report, released by the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence, that identified a list of 10 ''bad apple'' gun dealers. According to data released by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearm and Explosives, the dealers cited in the Brady Campaign report were the source of thousands of guns traced to criminal activity. Earlier this week, despite the startling information contained in the Brady report, the House of Representatives included an amendment in the Commerce, Justice, and State Departments appropriations bill which would not only make reports like the Brady Campaign's much more difficult to produce but also might cripple the ability of the ATF to enforce the nation's gun safety laws against firearms dealers who supply guns to criminals.

The House amendment would prohibit the public release of information related to the importation and production of firearms. This means that the only reliable national information available as to how many guns are produced in a given year, as well as type, caliber, and manufacturer, would no longer be available to the public. Further, the amendment would prohibit the public release of information related to multiple handgun sales. Under current law, dealers are required to notify the ATF of the sale of two or more handguns to the same person within 5