

sustainable environment for future generations.

Ethanol and biodiesel greatly benefit public health and the environment by protecting air and water quality and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. They are nontoxic, biodegradable, energy efficient, and cleaner burning sources of energy than petroleum-based fuels. A new report by the Pew Center on Global Climate Change finds that ethanol-blended fuels offer us the greatest promise for reducing transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions over the next 15 years.

The U.S. Department of Energy has concluded that petroleum-based fuels account for 82 percent of carbon monoxide, which, according to the National Research Council, accounts for 20 percent of smog formation in cities. In contrast, the Environmental Protection Agency has determined that ethanol-blended fuels significantly reduce these emissions, and biodiesel nearly eliminates sulfur emissions that contribute to acid rain and reduces potential cancer-causing compounds.

Clearly, the renewable fuels standard represents a momentous opportunity to enhance our Nation's energy security, strengthen our economy, create jobs, boost farm and rural income, and help clean up our environment. The 5 billion gallons of renewable fuels that would ultimately be required by the renewable fuels standard would replace gasoline we currently get from foreign oil, and at the same time reduce the price at the pump. Simply put, renewable fuels make good, common sense for our Nation and all of its citizens.

More to the point of the amendment now before us by the Senator from California on State exemptions—there is really no need to grant States exemptions right now because in the underlying bill it already provides for States to be able to apply for and be granted an EPA waiver if they can show the RFS severely harms the economy or environment of the State or if there is an inadequate domestic supply or distribution capacity to meet the requirement. So, really, the amendment offered by the Senator from California is unneeded because there is already a waiver provision in there.

Well, our renewable fuels standard is something we passed last year overwhelmingly with bipartisan support. I know there will be several attempts here to weaken it. I hope we again have, as we did last year, overwhelming bipartisan support to keep this strong renewable fuels standard in this bill and, get this Energy bill through and to the President so he can sign it this year.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SESSIONS). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senator from New Mexico is recognized.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I want to discuss with the Senate where we are. As manager of the bill, I am interested in trying to see if we can entice and excite Senators about bringing their amendments that have to do with the ethanol part of this bill to the floor today, if possible. We have two pending and, very shortly, we will have a consent agreement regarding voting on those two. That would give us the afternoon for further discussion on and the reception of other amendments with reference to ethanol—if Senators desire to do that. We are aware of two or three others, perhaps four Senators who would like to offer amendments regarding ethanol.

I remind Senators there are many more issues in this Energy bill, although this is a very important one. Obviously, we want it thoroughly debated and, ultimately, hopefully, from the managers' standpoint, we would like it to be adopted as part of the bill. Sooner or later, we have to head on to some of the other provisions. There are seven or eight contentious ones at least that need to be discussed. We are now awaiting final word from the other side as to whether we can proceed. I understand we can.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to morning business.

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

MEASURE PLACED ON CALENDAR—S. 1162

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I understand that S. 1162 is at the desk and is due for a second reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. DOMENICI. I ask that it be in order to read the title of the measure.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the title of the bill for the second time.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1162) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to accelerate the increase in the refundability of the child tax credit, and for other purposes.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I ask that the Senate proceed to the measure and object to further proceeding.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Under rule XIV, the measure will be placed on the calendar.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. 14

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I understand the ethanol sequencing of votes is acceptable, so I will propound the unanimous consent request.

I ask unanimous consent that a vote occur in relation to the Feinstein amendment No. 843 at 4:30 today and that there be 10 minutes equally divided for debate prior to the vote. I further ask that following that vote, the Senate immediately proceed to a vote in relation to the Feinstein amendment No. 844, with 4 minutes equally divided for debate prior to that vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, that means that at 4:30 we will start the first vote on S. 14, the Energy Policy Act. There will be two votes. There is another matter already pending, but we will await the arrival of the chairman of the HELP Committee, Senator GREGG, to see what his pleasure is regarding further time to debate the LIHEAP amendment and an amendment I made on his behalf thereto.

Hopefully that, too, can be disposed of today, although the Senator from New Mexico is in no way pushing that because Senator GREGG will use whatever time he needs in that regard.

Once again, Mr. President, I say to my fellow Senators, I know some of them have other amendments regarding the ethanol amendment. We also know that the ethanol amendment is very popular. We think it is a fair assessment to say it is probably going to pass rather handsomely in the Senate. Nonetheless, Senators desire to make their case and make their points, and the Senate is disposed, obviously, to let them do that. It would be nice if we could get that much of the bill done today; that is, debate on those issues pertaining to ethanol.

I note Senator BINGAMAN is standing. Perhaps he desires to speak at this point.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I certainly have no objection to anything the chairman said, but I would like to clarify, the votes are to start at 4:30 p.m. today; is that what the unanimous-consent agreement provides?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. That is correct.

Mr. BINGAMAN. I appreciate that. I yield the floor.

Mr. DOMENICI. I assume I said 4 o'clock. I was incorrect. It is 4:30 p.m.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the hour of 12:30 p.m. having arrived, the Senate will

stand in recess until the hour of 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:29 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. VOINOVICH).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, in my capacity as a Senator from the State of Ohio, suggests the absence of a quorum.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

ENERGY POLICY ACT OF 2003—
Continued

Mr. TALENT. Mr. President, I want to speak briefly on the renewable fuels standard that is the subject of the Frist-Daschle amendment, and specifically with regard to a report released today by the National Corn Growers which contains yet another round of good news regarding ethanol.

For decades, those of us who care about energy in the United States and care about energy independence, who care about jobs and the creation of jobs, who care about the future and how we are going to have enough energy for this economy to expand throughout the 21st century have looked for alternative sources of energy. The Energy bill we are debating is a great progrowth, projobs Energy bill across the board. It encourages the production of traditional forms of energy, and it should. It encourages the production of oil and natural gas and nuclear energy. I support all of that. I think most of us in this Senate do. But all of us are concerned about the fact that the traditional forms of energy tend to be nonrenewable. There is a point at which we are in danger of running out. We import a lot of oil from foreign countries. About 59 percent of what we use in the United States we import.

We have all wanted and have talked about for decades the possibility of renewable sources of energy, particularly that we can make here. I go around Missouri and I talk with our corn growers and other agricultural producers about what a great day it will be when we can grow our own fuel effectively and when we don't have to worry about running out and being dependent on other countries.

As the Frist-Daschle amendment indicates, that day, if it is not here, is fast approaching. We are close to being able to grow our own fuel. That fuel is ethanol. It is a great day when that means more jobs for America. It will mean a greater measure of energy independence for our country and a greater measure of energy security for our country. It will mean support for and new markets for our family farmers and our agricultural producers. It is a good thing.

I am glad Senator FRIST and Senator DASCHLE have offered this amendment. I am a strong supporter of it. In fact, I am a cosponsor of it. I am proud of the fact that ethanol will be the subject of one of the first genuine bipartisan efforts in this country, and I hope that amendment passes.

The Corn Growers issued a report today designed to rebut some of the concerns that people have expressed. It is kind of ironic that we are now approaching this day when we actually have access to renewable sources of energy and alternative fuels. And some are getting nervous about it. Their report issued today indicates what common sense already tells us.

First of all, blending ethanol with gasoline at a 10-percent level, which is what the renewable fuels standard calls for, will reduce the retail price of conventional gas by 5 percent or 6.6 cents per gallon based on national average 2002 prices. This translates into an annual savings to consumers of \$3.3 billion. The report says that. They have studied it for a long time. It really is a matter of common sense because when you increase the supply, the price goes down. The more ethanol we produce, the more we can rely on renewable sources we can grow and the greater the supply of energy.

The report also indicated that using corn and other grains to produce the 5 billion gallons of ethanol required by the renewable fuels standard will have an insignificant impact on consumer food prices.

In other words, the price of corn and other items is not going to go up because we have tremendous productive capacity in this country. As a matter of fact, we are not using the capacity we have. As a matter of fact, the price to consumers is going to go down because as our producers are able to grow corn and turn it into a value-added commodity, a valuable commodity, ethanol, the price of future farm bills is going to go down.

I was impressed very much when I was in Macon, MO, visiting our ethanol plant there. One of the producers who owns that plant pulled me aside and said: Senator TALENT, the real good thing about this is when the price of corn goes down, I make more money on the ethanol.

I thought to myself: Yes, that is one of the keys to ethanol. It will help smooth out some of the cycles of commodity prices, the ups and downs of commodity prices worldwide, which will mean that farm bills will become less challenging every 5 years. It will also mean more money for the transportation trust fund once we have adopted the tax changes that the Finance Committee has worked out and which will accompany or follow shortly after this Energy bill.

It is a good thing for America. It is a good thing for our producers. It is a good thing for the creation of jobs.

I am glad this amendment is being offered. I want to address briefly the

amendment of the Senator from California. I know it is an amendment offered in good faith. It is an amendment to exempt California from the renewable fuels standard. It is a little hard for me to understand because the standard is not a mandate for the States. It is a mandate for the refineries. They have to have 5 billion gallons of ethanol refined and into circulation by the year 2012. That should not be difficult.

The use of ethanol is growing all over the country, precisely because of the advantages it offers, which I have outlined. Exempting States doesn't make any sense. California is already using ethanol. By this summer, 60 to 70 percent of the gasoline sold in California will be an ethanol blend.

I suspect that maybe States such as California think: we don't produce ethanol here; we don't want to have to import energy from other States. If you do not import energy from other States, and if you do not import ethanol from other States, you are going to have to import something from someplace in order to run the automobiles. I would a whole heck of a lot rather have States in this country importing ethanol, which is good for the environment and jobs in the United States, from other States in the U.S. than the alternative, which is to import gasoline, which is not as good for the environment and which does not mean jobs for our country, from Venezuela or from the Arab States or from some other place in the world. They are taking one of the tremendous virtues of the renewable fuels standard and trying to turn it into a vice.

It will reduce our dependence on foreign countries.

There is really no danger to the United States being dependent on fuel that we produce in the United States. It is a good thing to be dependent on fuel we produce in Missouri or Minnesota or North Dakota or South Dakota or Illinois or any of the number of States that produce ethanol.

I understand the uneasiness. The use of ethanol is growing very fast. Its future is coming on us very fast. Sometimes change is difficult to deal with. I was in a Breaktime convenience store in Columbia, MO, where they are selling ethanol at the pump for the same price they have traditionally sold gasoline. I went to this place, stood out next to the pump, talked to the proprietors, and said: This is the future. It is a good future. It is a national future for the United States. This is a national energy policy. We have one Union, not just 50 different States. We have one national economy, and we ought to have one renewable fuels standard for everybody, and we ought to have confidence in it.

I think this 5-billion-gallon standard will be very easily attained. I think we will be above that. States all over the country and consumers all over the country are using ethanol to their benefit and to the benefit of the Nation as