

that were promised in that bill. To now make changes to the farm bill by enacting steep cuts to commodity and conservation programs undermines our family farmers and ranchers and demonstrates the administration's lack of commitment to rural economic development.

This conference report also contains \$12.7 billion in cuts to the federal student loan program. Unfortunately, this marks the largest cut to student financial aid programs in history. While the legislation does contain funding for the creation of the new Academic Competitiveness Grants and the National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent Grants, National SMART Grants, the Senate-passed budget reconciliation legislation contained more than \$8 billion in new need-based assistance to supplement Pell Grants.

The Academic Competitiveness Grants Program would limit aid to a small subset of financially eligible students that completed a rigorous secondary school program to be defined by the Secretary of Education. I support students taking a rigorous high school curriculum, but this would be the first time the Federal Government links need-based financial aid to the academic curriculum available to a student.

The National SMART Grants Program would limit aid to only those students choosing to major in math, science, technology, engineering, computer science, or high-need foreign language. While we all want more students to study math and sciences, we also need to find additional need-based aid for students that choose other important academic fields.

Finally, this will be the fourth year in a row that Congress has failed to increase the maximum Pell Grant award from \$4,050.

The Republican leadership has argued that these cuts are a necessary step toward restoring fiscal discipline. However, when these cuts are paired with the tax reconciliation bill, they will actually cause an increase in the national debt. Leaders in Congress have made it clear that after the completion of the omnibus spending bill, Congress will consider the extension of investment tax breaks geared disproportionately toward the super rich with incomes in excess of \$200,000 annually. Correspondingly, the estimated cost from these tax cuts to the Treasury and the American public far outweigh the savings forecast from the omnibus spending bill. A key intent of the reconciliation process is to reign in the governmental spending or to move through the Congress changes to mandatory domestic programs.

The majority intends to pervert this process by using the omnibus spending bill as a device to free up room in the budget for costly tax cuts primarily geared toward the wealthiest two percent of taxpayers. The end result is that future generations will be saddled with higher borrowing costs and lower

economic growth in order to pay off the national debt charges run up by the fiscally irresponsible tax cuts pushed by this Congress. This vote is not for fiscal discipline and reduced deficits. Instead, those pushing through today's spending cut bill are doing so to make room for further tax cuts and billions more to the national debt.

Mr. President, I recognize we must get our fiscal house in order. However, I do not believe that budget cuts should come at the expense of ordinary people and struggling family farmers when huge agribusinesses continue to reap millions without effective payment caps in place, and tax cuts for multimillionaires are being preserved. The priorities set forth in this conference report are wrong; I will vote against the conference report and urge my colleagues to do the same.

COLONEL NORM VAUGHAN

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I rise in tribute to COL Norm Vaughan who accompanied ADM Richard Byrd to Antarctica. He celebrates his 100th birthday today. The Anchorage Daily News has printed an article by Carol Phillips talking about Vaughan as a great man and good friend. I ask unanimous consent to print the article in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Anchorage Daily News, Dec. 19, 2005]

VAUGHAN IS A GREAT MAN, GOOD FRIEND
(By Carol A. Phillips)

On a February day in 1964, I hurried down to the main street of my little town where the annual sled dog race was about to start. Excited about this sporting event that had always intrigued me, I lingered near the starting line as the racers made last-minute preparations and the dogs leaped and yelped their impatience to hit the trail.

Suddenly I heard a voice in an accent that was music to my ears—a Bostonian here in Interior Alaska. Having emigrated recently from Maine, I was compelled to trace the source of that unmistakable accent. That was the day I met Col. Norman Vaughan, then a young 58, who was working as a handler for a New Hampshire racer. That meeting was the beginning of a beautiful friendship.

The achievements of Vaughan's extraordinary career are familiar to his legion of friends. He returned in the mid-1970s to make his home here and became such a legend in his own time that it's hard to realize he has not always been an Alaskan.

His adventures and accomplishments are diverse. He played an essential role as dog handler on the 1927 Byrd Antarctic expedition; served with distinction in the military; airlifted supplies to Dr. Wilfred Grenfell's Labrador mission; coordinated the rescue of 25 airmen stranded on the Greenland icecap; retrieved the top-secret Norden bombsight so critical to the United States during World War II; ran in several Iditarod races; spearheaded the effort to resurrect World War II P-38s interred in Greenland's ice; drove a team of huskies in President Reagan's inaugural parade in Washington, D.C.; gave Pope John Paul II a lesson in dog mushing during the pontiff's 1981 visit to Anchorage; initi-

ated the annual re-enactment of the 1925 Nenana-to-Nome serum run; wrote a couple of books; and ascended 10,302-foot Mount Vaughan, named for him by Adm. Richard Byrd.

Even more memorable to me are some personal experiences involving Vaughan. When my family was vacationing on a Maine island in 1966, Norman drove up from his Massachusetts home to visit us, entrancing my children with a fascinating repertoire of stories and a supply of his famous homemade root beer. When he first lived in Anchorage he walked from his tiny downtown apartment to and from his night-shift janitorial job at the university, with never a complaint.

Through his friendship with the Dr. Schultz band, I came to know those talented musicians who brightened the Anchorage scene in the late 1970s. When Joe Redington Sr. sold one-square-foot parcels of his Knik land to raise money for the creation of the now world-famous Iditarod race, Norman presented each of my four children with a landowner's deed, prompting my youngest to observe that if they pooled the deeds, "we could build a very small but very tall house."

Recently, one of my young grandsons, having seen Norman in a TV ad, was awestruck to learn that I knew Norman personally. He was further awed when I took him to visit the Vaughan home, where Norman talked with him not about his own accomplishments but about the child's interests, experiences and ambitions, encouraging him to pursue his special dreams.

Today, Col. Vaughan attains another remarkable goal—his 100th birthday. During that century he has enjoyed more spectacular adventures and significant achievements than the average person can imagine or aspire to. He had hoped to spend his 100th birthday atop his eponymous mountain in Antarctica, a lofty goal which could not be realized. It is said that when he was advised that the trip was not going to happen, his typically positive response was, "Oh well, just not this year."

It is a privilege to call this great, good man my friend. Happy birthday, Norman!

CLIMATE CHANGE NEGOTIATIONS AND IMPACTS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, with a sense of continued disappointment and dismay I read accounts of the administration's performance at the recent international climate change meetings in Montreal, Canada.

The President has been crystal clear in his complete rejection of the Kyoto Protocol treaty that all other major industrialized nations have signed, except the United States and Australia. Yet he has regularly failed to put forward a constructive alternative that will ever result in stabilizing greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere. Worse, his negotiators have disrupted other nations' efforts to begin binding discussions for the post-Kyoto Protocol period.

This is not and cannot be a partisan issue. But the President's stubborn insistence on ignoring credible science and his administration's efforts to water down clear scientific evidence of manmade global warming has hobbled many Republicans' ability to act sensibly on this matter.

We have a moral obligation to take on our enormous share of responsibility for this global problem before it

is too late. Ignoring the problem is madness and a luxury we do not have the time for. The scientific data continues to flow in and none of it is good.

I urge my colleagues not to fall for the temptation of the administration's voluntary "technology-only" strategy. That will fail to produce any significant reductions in the timeframe necessary. There is abundant cause for concern and for faster action.

I ask unanimous consent to print in the RECORD some of the most recent scientific information on the potential impacts of global warming on Nevada and the West, as well as the rest of the country and the world.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

Potential Climate Changes Impact on Nevada:

The Scripps Institution of Oceanography found, and their findings were subsequently published in *Nature* that, "The warming trend already is showing effects in California's Sierra Nevada snow pack, the region's main water source. Climate models suggest average temperatures in the West will be about 1 to 3 degrees warmer by 2050 than at present. Even though total precipitation isn't expected to change by much, because of the higher temperatures more of it will come as rain rather than snow. At the same time, the spring runoff will come about one month earlier in the year." (San Francisco Chronicle, November 17, 2005—Global warming study forecasts more water shortages: Climate change already affecting Sierra snowpack.)

The National Weather Service ominously reported that "in a year of record highs across northern Nevada, conditions are on pace for this October (2005) to be the hottest on record, said Gary Barbato of the National Weather Service. During 2003, average temperatures for the months of January, June and July were all the hottest since records began in 1888, with September 2003 and September 2001 tied for the warmest average." (Reno Gazette Journal, October 21, 2003—Climate experts study global warming's impact on water supplies.)

Nevada has been blessed with a rich natural heritage. "Nevada is home to an incredible diversity of native wildlife species, including 299 birds, 123 mammals, 48 fish, 52 reptiles and 13 amphibians. Rising temperatures in the state though will likely change the makeup of entire ecosystems, forcing wildlife to shift their ranges or adapt. Loss of wildlife and habitat could mean a loss of tourism dollars. In 2001 alone, more than 657,000 people spent more than \$680 million on hunting, fishing and wildlife viewing in Nevada, which in turn created more than 9,400 jobs in the state." (ESPN Outdoors, March 15, 2005—Hunters give big bucks to local economies: Pursuers of game big and small can tip the financial scale from red to black in small communities, and it underscores the fact that the sport is expensive.)

One animal that is already being impacted by climate change in Nevada is the pika. According to researchers, between the 1940s and the 1990s, six of 25 pika populations throughout the Western states disappeared, largely because of rising temperatures. When the same sites were visited again between 2003 and 2005, a research biologist found that two more pika populations had winked out of existence in that ten year period. (High Country News, October 17, 2005—In the Great Basin, scientists track global warming.)

Fire climatology—Collaborative studies involving the Desert Research Institute show

that changes in relative humidity, especially drying over much of the West, are projected to increase the number of days of high fire danger by as much as 2-3 weeks throughout the Great Basin during this century.

Flood magnitude and frequency—A Desert Research Institute scientist has shown that increased sea surface temperatures in the Gulf of Mexico affect the timing of the onset of the North American monsoon, with important implications for the magnitude and frequency of heavy rainfall (and flooding) in southern Nevada.

Scientists from the Desert Research Institute, and the University of Nevada at Reno and at Las Vegas have been conducting controlled field and laboratory experiments on the effects of increased CO₂ on ecosystems, the carbon cycle, and stability of desert soils in the Mojave Desert of southern Nevada. Initial results show that elevated CO₂ has the potential to increase the productivity of invasive grasses (e.g., cheat grass) and thereby accelerate the fire cycle and reduce biodiversity in the Great Basin.

Potential Climate Change Impacts on the West:

The Pacific Northwest National Laboratory released a scientific report last February which showed "from 1950 to 1997, in Oregon, western Washington and northern California, snow pack shrank by 50 to 75 percent. Decreases in the northern Rockies during that period ranged between 15 and 30 percent. The reduction in Western mountain snow cover, from the Sierra Nevada range that feeds California in the south to the snow-capped volcanic peaks of the Cascades in the Pacific Northwest, will lead to increased fall and winter flooding, severe spring and summer drought that will play havoc with the West's agriculture, fisheries and hydropower industry." (Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, February 16, 2004—Global warming to squeeze Western mountains dry by 2050.)

At a 2004 gathering by the American Association for the Advancement of Science in Seattle, the University of Washington's Climate Impacts Group detailed that "Northwest temperatures will increase by about 3 to 6 degrees Fahrenheit by the 2040s, and the Cascades snowpack will decline by 59 percent by 2050." (AP, February 17, 2004—Warmer weather spells trouble for Northwest.)

The United States Environmental Protection Agency's website has documented how global warming and climate change are diminishing the beauty of Glacier National Park. "Today, the park's largest glaciers are only about a third of the size they were in 1850, and many small mountain glaciers have disappeared completely during the past 150 years. The area of the park covered by glaciers declined by 73 percent from 1850-1993." (United States Environmental Protection Agency, August 13, 2001—Global Warming Impacts: Western Mountains.)

In 2004, a study was published in the magazine titled *Conservation Biology* about the severe impacts that climate change could have on the wildfire season in Montana. "Of all the Western states, Montana's wildfire season could be most affected by the warmer temperatures associated with global climate change", according to a new report. Published in *Conservation Biology* magazine, the research suggests the acreage burned each summer in Montana could increase five-fold by the end of the century. Overall, the area burned by wildfires in 11 Western states could double by 2100 if the summertime climate warms by 1.6 degrees, the scientists said. (The Missoulian, September 1, 2004—Report details global warming's role in wildfire risk.)

Potential Climate Change Impacts on the Nation and the World:

The Division of Geological and Planetary Science at the California Institute of Tech-

nology, the Department of Geological Sciences at the University of Michigan, and the Department of Geology at the Occidental College recently collaborated to publish an article about Glacial Erosion. The article, which was published in the December issue of *Science*, found that "levels of carbon dioxide (CO₂), the principal gas that drives global warming, are now 27 pct higher than at any point in the last 650,000 years, according to research into Antarctic ice cores." (Forbes, November 24, 2005—Carbon dioxide levels highest for 650,000 years.)

On November 29, 2005, the European Environment Agency warned that "at current global warming rates, three-quarters of Switzerland's glaciers will have melted by 2050. Ten percent of Alpine glaciers disappeared during the summer of 2003." (Associated Press, November 29, 2005—Global warming set to hit Europe badly: environment agency.)

At a recent meeting (2005) of the American Geophysical Union, scientists described how "climate warming is most likely to blame for the alarmingly fast retreat of two of Greenland's largest glaciers. One of the Greenland glaciers, Kangerdlugssuaq, is currently moving at about nine miles a year compared to three miles a year in 2001, said Gordon Hamilton of the University of Maine's Climate Change Institute. The other glacier, Helheim, is speeding at about seven miles a year—up from four miles a year during the same period." In addition, "Alaska's Columbia Glacier—about the size of Los Angeles—has shrunk nine miles since the 1980s. It is expected to lose an additional nine miles in the next 15 to 20 years. (The San Jose Mercury News, December 8, 2005—Scientists: Greenland glaciers pick up speed because of warming.)

The academic journal *Nature* has published a scientific study indicating that the "system of circulating water currents that moderates northern Europe's weather is 30 percent slower than it was nearly 50 years ago. The slowdown is due in part to the water's declining salinity caused by the addition of less dense freshwater from melting Arctic sea ice and glaciers." Harry Bryden, an oceanography professor at Britain's University of Southampton and the paper's lead author said that "the slowing is in line with computer models that suggest that Earth's warming climate could weaken and eventually halt the conveyor belt circulation altogether, causing northern Europe to become as much as 11 degrees Fahrenheit cooler in a matter of decades." (Contra Costa Times, December 1, 2005—Scientists find ocean-current changes.)

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration recorded a record twenty six named storms formed during the 2005 Atlantic hurricane season easily surpassing the previous record of twenty one in 1933. A record for the most category-five hurricanes, three, with Katrina, Rita and Wilma was also set. (CNN, November 30, 2005—It's official: 2005 hurricanes blew records away.)

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET ACT COMPLIANCE

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, pursuant to section 313(c) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, I submit for the RECORD a list of material in the conference agreement on S. 1932 considered to be extraneous under subsections (b)(1)(A), (b)(1)(B), and (b)(1)(E) of section 313. The inclusion or exclusion of material on the following list does not constitute a determination of extraneousness by the Presiding Officer of the Senate.