

States cannot stand by while the EU stalls these discussions about launch aid.

Today, we all know the aerospace industry remains very important to the United States. The aerospace sector generates about 15 percent of our Nation's gross domestic product. However, I think the real issue for us is that the United States builds and finances planes through Wall Street and the private marketplace. Our domestic companies should not have to compete against the backing of European governments, against the deep pockets of governments that distort the global marketplace.

If, in fact, the EU drags its feet, how will these issues be resolved? Will they continue to argue that these launch aid subsidies are not the issue? Launch aid has provided Airbus with over \$15 billion in subsidization, really unfairly propping up Airbus at the expense of the U.S. aerospace market and its workers. In the last 15 years, the U.S. aerospace industry has lost about 700,000 jobs.

Essentially, launch aid becomes a risk-free, low-cost government bank for the development of new lines of aircraft. The company only needs to repay the loans if the new product succeeds. Nowhere in our private sector does anybody, any company, get such a deal that they only have to pay the banker back if, in fact, the product succeeds. So this is a very important issue.

Obviously, launch aid puts our domestic manufacturers at an unfair competitive disadvantage. Airbus remains unfettered by the realities of the marketplace when launching new jetliners, while American companies must assume substantial market risk every time they unveil a new product. If Airbus bets on the wrong plane, no problem, no harm, no foul, the loans are forgiven. This means Airbus can proceed with the design and production of a new plane without ever turning a profit on an existing product line. It also means that Airbus can undercut the price and pursue more aggressive financing practices than the U.S. can. Obviously, you can see the end result is that Airbus can offer a cheaper plane in the marketplace by unfairly subsidizing the financing of their planes.

Well, nevertheless, Airbus has continued, even though it has grown into a mature company, to receive 33 percent of the funding for its product development from European governments since 1992, translating into billions in launch aid loans at below market rates. At the same time, it has avoided an additional \$35 billion in current debt due to this subsidy. This launch aid distorts the global marketplace.

What we want to see in aerospace is competition that drives opportunities for the consumers. I believe that is why the United States has taken its aggressive position in saying that it will go to the WTO if necessary. I think it is time now to make sure that these negotiations between the United States

and the European Union, which originally were announced in January, are completed as soon as possible. But maybe it is not surprising that they are lagging at this moment.

I say that because Airbus has moved ahead with a plan to submit \$1.7 billion in an application for new launch aid for a new airplane, the A-350, which is designed to compete head-to-head with the Boeing 787. While negotiations to end launch aid are ongoing, there is simultaneously a new application to the European Union to support launch aid for a new plane. I believe that is probably why the Airbus CEO stated, about the new plane, the A-350: ". . . is easily financeable [sic] by Airbus without launch aid, but as long as there is refundable launch aid available, we will apply for it." This means, as long as they can get refunds later on launch aid, they will apply for it.

So while the European Union is supposedly at the table negotiating with the United States about getting rid of launch aid subsidies, it is continuing to discuss deals about launch aid for new planes.

It is clear that this does not paint a pretty picture. The European Union cannot have it both ways. It cannot pretend to be serious about negotiations with the United States to end launch aid subsidies and all the while sending a wink to Airbus about launch aid for the A-350.

The EU must level with the American public and the global community on whether it is serious about ending unfair subsidized financing of their aircraft.

Specifically, I think Commissioner Mandelson and the EU should consider the following actions: first, EU negotiators should declare their opposition to the launch aid for the A-350 and summarily reject the pending application that Airbus has prepared. Second, the EU should also reject all launch aid for future aircraft models.

We need to address these unfair subsidized financing issues and put an end to launch aid so that aircraft financing is on a level playing field. Failure to follow these processes will lead to swift action by our administration and the U.S. Government. Today, the U.S. stands ready to reach a resolution on this issue, but we must have a willing partner. The White House has expressed a strong commitment to finding an agreement, and the President has the backing of this Senator, and I believe many in Congress, to seek a resolution to this issue. I am sure my colleagues will join me in considering all options at our disposal to help find a resolution to this issue.

Last week, I was invited to the Smithsonian for a commemorative celebration of Space Ship One, a successful marvel, sponsored by Paul Allen and many others. The celebration marked the successful launch of the first commercial, manned spaceflight—something from which individual consumers will benefit in the fu-

ture. The Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum gave that award, and the flight signaled a new chapter in aviation history. There's something about the spirit of competition, about a group of people who came together to compete towards an exciting new chapter of aviation, and a level playing field of competition that delivered a great result.

Which is exactly what we have to get from the Europeans—a level playing field, to deliver a better result for the entire global community, for consumers, and for purchasers of aerospace and commercial aviation equipment by guaranteeing that we are going to have a level playing field.

I hope that these negotiations will continue in earnest and I am confident that Ambassador Zoellick and the new nominee, Mr. PORTMAN, will continue to be aggressive in resolving this issue. I believe we in the United States have fostered an environment for true competition for the private sector, to drive this industry to the next level. However, we need fair and balanced trade to make that successful.

I hope the Europeans will not stall these discussions, but that they will embrace the idea of fair competition as the end result.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. FRIST. 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 AGREEMENT—H. CON. RES. 95

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate receives H. Con. Res. 95 from the House, the Senate proceed to its consideration.

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

Mr. FRIST. Further, that all after the resolving clause be stricken and the text of S. Con. Res. 18 as agreed to be inserted in lieu thereof; further, that the resolution then be agreed to as amended and the Senate insist on its amendment, request a conference with the House, and the Chair be authorized to appoint conferees.

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. FRIST. I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period for morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

**TARGETED ENERGY INCENTIVES
TO ACHIEVE A NATIONAL EN-
ERGY STRATEGY**

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, on March 9, 2005, President Bush went to Columbus, OH for one of his many town hall meetings. Besides attempting to sell his Social Security plan, he also spoke about the need for a national energy policy. Not surprisingly, he raised the specter of high gas prices, increasing natural gas rates, and electricity blackouts as a justification to pass his energy plan. However, this issue needs more than just rhetoric. It needs real solutions.

The American people need look no further than the President's budget request to question that commitment to a serious energy policy. The President has cut funding for a number of important energy programs in his budget. For example, he has said that he supports clean coal technologies. He started professing his support on the campaign trail in October 2000, and he promised to commit \$2 billion over 10 years for the Clean Coal Technology demonstration program. This is the very program that I started back in 1985. Yet, each of his five budgets has failed to meet that goal. This year, he only requested \$50 million, instead of the promised \$200 million. In effect, he has promised those in the coal fields one dollar but has only anted up two bits. Furthermore, he touts the need for the FutureGen project but cannot say where the funding for this facility is going to come from down the road. His only option right now is to raid other clean coal programs, and I will not stand by and let him rob Peter to pay Paul.

The White House has proposed and the Majority has adopted just \$4.56 billion in energy tax incentives over five years in this Fiscal Year 2006 budget. How much did the President include for clean coal tax incentives in this year's budget request, or in previous years' budget requests? Nothing! We cannot demonstrate and deploy the next generation of clean coal technologies based on what this administration is actually willing to put on the table. The administration's co-called support for the clean coal technology programs is indicative of its support for so many important energy programs. This administration's much narrower package of energy tax incentives is inadequate to achieve our national energy policy goals.

I have long believed that the U.S. needs a comprehensive and balanced national energy policy. The looming concerns of electricity blackouts, energy prices, and increased dependence on foreign energy sources represent ominous clouds on the horizon. Sadly, our energy problems, like so many other challenges, are being addressed with ever shrinking funds and band-aid solutions. The pattern has been repeated over and over again. The Bush administration generates new initiatives, fails to fully fund them, and then

simultaneously cuts other important programs. At the same time, we have witnessed attempts to put a moratorium on federal gas taxes, to tap the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, and to make secretive deals with Saudi Arabia to produce more oil. We have endeavored to treat the symptoms, rather than the core problem, for far too long. This President may talk a good game, but how are we going to fix our energy ills with this President's prescription?

The United States needs affordable, reliable, and clean energy resources and technologies to support a growing economy and a healthy environment. We need a comprehensive, balanced, and diversified national energy policy that will promote a strong energy efficiency program and bolster our Nation's coal, natural gas, oil, renewable, nuclear, and other clean domestic energy technologies. A strong energy policy must help to maintain and upgrade these our critical energy infrastructure and support, retain, and create energy-related manufacturing and other service jobs that are an underpinning of our economy. A bipartisan energy strategy should encourage increased use of the most advanced energy supply and energy efficiency technologies and must support increased investments in an array of energy research and development programs.

Our Nation needs to begin defining alternative pathways and new approaches that go beyond the extremist debates and simplistic solutions that define our very demanding energy security and environmental challenges. It is time to move along that path. I urge my colleagues in the Senate to support an appropriate, equitable, and diversified mixture of at least \$15.5 billion in targeted energy tax incentives over the next ten years, and I urge the Finance Committee to find offsets so that this can be done in a fiscally sound way.

In the 108th Congress, the Senate supported a similar level for energy incentives. The Senate's Fiscal Year 2004 Budget Resolution, the last budget that Congress passed, provided for \$15.5 billion in energy tax incentives over ten years. In 2003, the Senate Finance Committee adopted and the Senate passed a balanced and bipartisan package of energy tax incentives in the amount of \$19.8 billion over ten years as a part of the Senate Energy Policy Act of 2003, part of which was offset. I supported that energy tax package as it provided an array of targeted energy incentives, including approximately \$2 billion to deploy advanced clean coal technologies.

Such an energy tax incentives package would help strengthen the economy, enhance our Nation's energy resources, promote an array of advanced energy technologies, increase jobs, and provide for a healthy environment. Is there a Member in this Chamber who is opposed to that? If there are going to be tax cuts in this budget, then we must increase funding for a range of energy tax incentives. Supporting at

least \$15.5 billion in energy tax incentives will send a strong message that these incentives are necessary to develop a national energy policy, and I urge my colleagues to stand with me in this request. Unless we can increase the pie for all of these energy technology approaches, there will not be enough to achieve our energy goals in any serious way.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

STAFF SERGEANT MELVIN L. BLAZER

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I wish to honor a brave Oklahoma soldier who gave the last full measure to protect our freedom. Staff Sergeant Melvin Blazer of the United States Marine Corps embodied the spirit of service and the values that make this country what it is.

Sergeant Blazer was a great Marine. He joined soon after graduating from Moore High School in 1984. As he rose through the ranks, he developed a reputation of dependability. He was serving as a platoon leader with the 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force when his unit was deployed to Iraq.

Sergeant Blazer was no stranger to the hazards of duty. He survived an improvised explosive device attack that struck his convoy last November and was awarded a Purple Heart.

Sergeant Blazer was also a family man. He married his wife, Dana, in 1989 and they had two children, Alyssa and Erik. As his wife recalls, "To know my husband was to love my husband. Everybody loved him and admired him and respected him and held him in such high regard. He was a hero in his everyday life."

Sergeant Blazer was also a Christian. He told relatives he was excited to see Iraq because the Bible talks about it and was proud to help and serve an oppressed people.

On December 12, 2004, Sergeant Blazer was killed by enemy small arms fire in the city of Fallujah. He was 38 years old. He loved God, devoted himself to his family and gave the highest sacrifice to his country. He leaves behind many who know what a true hero he is. As a son of Oklahoma and a fine example of what this country stands for, Staff Sergeant Blazer deserves our honor and remembrance.

LANCE CORPORAL JORDAN D. WINKLER

Mr. President, I wish to honor one of Oklahoma's fallen sons, Marine LCpl Jordan Winkler. From an early age he felt called to defend our country and the freedom it stands for. For his life of service and his final sacrifice, we are eternally indebted to him.

Corporal Winkler admired the military even before he was old enough to join. His parents still have a letter from the Marine Corps that he received when he was fifteen. While in Union High School in Tulsa, he was active in sports and respected by his peers.