

They don't seem to care because, I guess, it doesn't affect their economic lives directly. But I represent a State that has farm and ranch families from one side of our State to the other, from one corner of North Dakota to the other. The hard reality is they are out there competing against the French and German farmers, and they can do that. They are ready to do that, to take on a fair fight. But when you ask them to take on not just the French and German farmers but the French Government and the German Government, as well, that is not a fair fight. To say to our farmers and ranchers: You go out there and take on the French and German farmers, and while you are taking on the French and German Governments, your Government is going to be AWOL, absent without leave; your Government is going to declare unilateral disarmament; your Government is going to let you fend for yourself—good luck, Charlie, because the other side is outgunning us more than 3 to 1 already.

But some here say, let's not even put up a fight; let's throw in the towel and let the Europeans take over world agriculture. They are already equal to us in world market share. They are already advancing every day, increasing their market share, while ours slips—they are not alone, by the way. It is also our friends in Brazil, Argentina, and other countries who manage their currencies to secure advantage in terms of agriculture.

How long will it be, I ask these cynics, before America succumbs on the agricultural front the way we have on automobiles, electronics, and all the others, where our foreign competitors have taken the advantaged position? How long? We are right on the brink of it happening now.

This farm bill is an attempt to meet many needs of the American people. As I said, if you look at where the money goes, the overwhelming majority of this money goes for nutrition; 66 percent of the money in this bill goes to nutrition. I hear some of my colleagues from nonfarm States saying, "I don't have a dog in this fight; I don't really care what happens in the farm bill." Really? Then you don't know what is in the bill. Somebody from a nonfarm State who says they don't have anything in this fight simply don't know what is in the bill.

Sixty-six percent of the money goes for nutrition, 9 percent for conservation, and more for research and trade. That is where the money goes in this bill. Commodity programs are a small minority of less than 14 percent. As a share of total Federal spending, the commodity parts of this bill, according to the Congressional Budget Office, will be less than one-quarter of 1 percent of Federal spending. That is a fact. It is an important fact. It is a fact that the Washington Post, apparently, doesn't want people to know because they never report it. They also never report that the vast majority of this

money goes to nutrition programs, or that the next biggest category is conservation. They have an agenda, and their agenda is to look down their nose at people who are in production agriculture, farm, and ranch families, who apparently don't have their respect.

It is interesting, they don't write the same kind of article about any other industry that gets help from the Federal Government. Virtually every industry in America has some kind of Federal assistance, whether it is highways for the trucking industry or airports for the airline industry or any of the other things that are done for industry after industry. I don't see them come after them with this same sort of look-down-your-nose arrogance because that is what it is. It is incredible arrogance.

Mr. President, I hope my colleagues will have a chance to pay attention to both sides of the story in this farm program today. They deserve to hear both sides of the story.

I 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. HARKIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. McCASKILL). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for up to 10 minutes.

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

PRESIDENTIAL VETO

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, earlier today, President Bush vetoed the Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Appropriations bill. I wish I could say I was surprised but, frankly, few actions by this President surprise me anymore. This is a good bill, a bipartisan bill, a bill that cleared both Houses with clear, strong majorities. In fact, the first one cleared here by 75 votes. It is a bill that reflects the critical education, health, job training needs of our country, especially for Americans who are at the bottom rungs of the socio-economic ladder. The bill was endorsed by more than 1,000—actually 1,075, to be exact—health, education, social service, and labor organizations in this country. There are disability groups in this letter, disease advocacy groups, school groups, community action partnerships, religious groups—millions of people across America are represented on this letter. This morning President Bush turned his back on all of them.

He seems to have no problem pouring billions of dollars into Iraq for schools, hospitals, job programs, health needs, but when it comes to those priorities here in America, the President says no. After spending all these billions of dollars on schools, hospitals, job pro-

grams, and health needs in Iraq, it is time to start investing some of that money here in America.

The President insists we have to stick to exactly the top number in his budget. Frankly, if we did that, we would be cutting programs such as the Low Income Heating Energy Assistance Program for the elderly at a time when we know fuel prices are going to be extremely high this winter.

The President completely zeroed out the social services block grant and cut the community services block grant by 50 percent.

Under the President's budget, we would be cutting the National Cancer Institute. At a time when we are starting to make some progress in the fight against cancer, Alzheimer's, Parkinson's and so many other things, he cuts funding for the NIH.

Again, we need to put more money into special education to help some of our beleaguered property tax payers in our States.

We have a backlog of several hundred thousand cases in Social Security. People who have paid in all their lives to Social Security, if they have a problem and they have an appeal pending or a case to be heard—there are 700,000 backlogged. It is about a year-and-a-half wait right now to get Social Security. It is unconscionable. We put money in there to reduce the backlog.

We wanted to fund more community health centers as one of the great things we have done in this country to help people who are not getting their health care needs attended to, to get them at their community health care centers. It has done a great job nationally.

We put more money into the Head Start Program. And No Child Left Behind—we put more money in there to meet our needs in title I schools, teacher training.

These are all provisions that were in our bill. As I noted before, it was bipartisan. I worked very closely with Senator SPECTER, our ranking member. There were dozens of provisions and funding increases in the bill that were requested specifically by Republicans, those on the other side of the aisle who requested that we increase funding in these areas. Unfortunately, it seems Mr. Bush is more interested in provoking a confrontation than in governing responsibly. He recently dismissed the funding in this bill as "social spending," as though somehow it pays for ice cream socials or Saturday-night socials or something such as that—social spending. I never heard it referred to like that. It is out of bounds, it is out of touch, it shows how isolated this President has become.

Every dime of additional funding in this bill goes to bedrock essential programs and services that have been shortchanged in the last few years. I mentioned them: community health centers, Head Start, NIH, special education, student aid, social services block grant and community services

block grant, Pell grants. These are all things that have been shortchanged. The President's budget would cut NIH, LIHEAP, special education, and eliminate the community services block grant, job training, housing and emergency food assistance for our most needy citizens. Apparently, Mr. Bush sees this as frivolous social spending. I couldn't disagree more.

We have to keep the President's veto this morning in context. During the 6 years Republicans controlled Congress, Mr. Bush did not veto a single appropriations bill, including many that went over his budget. He never vetoed one of them. Now Democrats are in charge. Yes, we have gone over budget in some of the areas I mentioned and not only with the support but the encouragement of Republican Members who wanted to add more money. I guess because the Democrats run Congress now, the President says he will veto them. He did. He vetoed the bill this morning, but he never vetoed one in 6 years even though they were above his request. It smacks of the most blatant form of partisanship and politics. It kind of goes beyond the pale.

A few weeks ago the President sent up a new supplemental spending bill. We will be working on that this week. I don't know if we will pass it this week or when we come back in December. It is more than \$196 billion, mostly for Iraq. The Congressional Budget Office now estimates that Mr. Bush's war in Iraq will cost a staggering \$1.9 trillion in the next decade. Yet he vetoed this bill, over \$12 billion in funding for education, health, biomedical research, and other domestic priorities.

You ask: \$1.9 trillion, \$12 billion, what does it mean? Look at it this way: Do away with all the zeroes. It means Mr. Bush is asking for \$1,900 for Iraq. Yet he vetoed this bill because we spent \$12 more than what he wanted. That shows misplaced priorities: \$12 billion a month for the war in Iraq, yet he vetoed this bill which is \$12 billion for a whole year.

What is most disappointing about the President's veto this morning is his total unwillingness to compromise. Any time we work out bills, we compromise. That is the art of democracy. We compromise. No one around here ever gets everything he or she wants, but we make compromises. We do it in committee; we do it on the floor of the Senate. We do it between the House and the Senate. Then when all is said and done and we work in conference, usually the President will work with us to work out problems. This is where the White House is. Where do we meet? The President never came to our conference—I shouldn't say the President didn't, but his people never came to our conference to offer compromises, where we might meet halfway.

When the President sent down his veto message, he mentioned two things about our bill: One, it had the lifting of his ban on stem cell research; two, it spent more money than he wanted. I

thought a compromise might be: OK, we will take off the stem cell stuff, and you agree to the spending priorities we have. We voluntarily, to try to meet the President halfway, said: OK, we will take off the stem cell issue, even though Senator SPECTER and I both believe strongly in it. It passed the committee with only three dissenting votes. The Senate has spoken at least twice in support of an embryonic stem cell bill to take off the handcuffs the President has put on scientists. But even that wasn't enough.

Then we went to conference. We thought: OK, will the President now try to meet us somewhat on the spending part? The answer was no. It was his way or the highway. We either agree totally with the President or he is going to veto it and the White House will put pressure on the House because that is where the bill goes for an override, to keep them from overriding his veto.

It is sad the President has taken that position. Under the Constitution, Congress does have the power to override a veto. It happened last week with the water resources bill. He vetoed it. Both the House and Senate voted over two-thirds, as is constitutionally required, to override the veto. We could do it on this bill that funds education, everything from Head Start, elementary education with title I, No Child Left Behind, elementary and secondary education, college with Pell grants, student loans, forgiveness of loans if you go into certain occupations such as medically underserved areas, legal services, or become a prosecuting attorney—the type of occupations that don't pay a lot of money but are needed in our country.

On health, especially all the biomedical research that was in that bill for NIH, the money for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for making sure we get more flu vaccine this year stockpiled, not to mention all of the efforts that CDC is doing in stockpiling other vaccines in case of a terrorist incident, something that might happen—we hope it doesn't, but we have to be prepared for it—that is in this bill he vetoed.

I mentioned things such as low-income heating energy assistance for low-income elderly. This is all in this bill. Now it is up to the House whether they will vote to override the veto. It will be interesting to see how many House Members would vote to override the President on the water resources bill but would not vote to override a bill that deals with health, education, community block grants, NIH, the Centers for Disease Control. It will be interesting.

The Water Resources Development Act was an important bill. I was strongly supportive of it. It goes basically to meet one of the urgent infrastructure needs of the country: waterways, to make sure we upgrade our locks and dams and make sure they are adequate to the environmental needs

and river transportation needs for the next century. It is vital. The Education, Health and Human Services, and Labor appropriations bill is sort of the counterpart of that in terms of the human infrastructure, making sure we have the best educated populace, that we meet the health care needs of people, that we invest in cutting edge research, that we have good job retraining programs.

We just had a case where a Maytag plant, after all these years, closed in Newton, IA. We need job retraining programs. That is in this bill the President vetoed. It is human infrastructure needs.

It will be interesting to see how many House Members vote to override the President when it comes to the physical infrastructure but now will not vote to override the President when it comes to the human infrastructure. I hope it is very few. I hope we get the same number of votes to override the President's veto on this Education, Health and Human Services, and Labor appropriations bill as we got on the water resources bill.

It is a sad day that the President would veto this bill. We went out of our way to meet him halfway, but he said absolutely not. It is his way or nothing else.

That is not the way we do things. The President is not acting responsibly, quite frankly, in this area. I don't know what we can do. If the House overrides the veto, I am pretty certain we would have the votes here to override the veto. We would have to wait for the House to act first. I hope they do, and I hope we get it. I hope we vote to override the veto. But until then, we have to see what the House is going to do.

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. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business for 10 minutes.

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

PRESIDENT'S VETO OF LABOR, HHS APPROPRIATIONS BILL

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, they say in life you can really judge a person's values by where they put their wealth. Certainly, we all love our families, and we think nothing of spending a lot of money on our children. We all value our health, and we go to great extent to spend whatever is necessary to have a healthy lifestyle and to live on for many years.

The President, today, had a chance to demonstrate his values with his veto pen. He had a chance to decide what priorities we should have in America

for our future. We sent him a bill called the Labor, Health and Human Services appropriations bill.

There was a venerable Congressman from Kentucky named Bill Natcher. He served for many years and distinguished himself as never having missed a rollcall vote in his life. I will not get into that side story, but his responsibility in the House Appropriations Committee was to chair the subcommittee that generated this spending bill, the Labor, Health and Human Services bill, the bill that includes education, health care, medical research—programs that really directly reach the people of America. He called it the people's bill. He used to wear these starched white shirts and dark-blue suits and silver-gray ties. He looked like a Senator. He had the gray hair and would stand there and say: This is the people's bill. The people should vote for it. And they did. Overwhelmingly, House Members—Democrats and Republicans—would vote for it because this bill really does reach families everywhere across America.

President Bush decided to veto this bill today. He vetoed the bill, which is rare. Incidentally, he never vetoed a bill until this year. Now, he has, after a long search, found his veto pen and is using it frequently. He vetoed this bill this year because it called for 4 percent more spending than he had asked for—\$6 billion.

Madam President, \$6 billion is a lot of money, for sure, but not by Federal budget standards. The President, before he vetoed this bill, signed the Defense appropriations bill. That bill was 10 percent over his request, and yet he signed it. When it came to this bill that reaches families and people across America, he said no.

Of course, this President, who says we cannot afford \$6 billion for programs for the American people, is asking us for \$196 billion for programs for the people of Iraq—\$196 billion. It is hard to understand how we cannot afford health care in America, cancer research in America, education in America, worker protection in America, homeless shelters for veterans in America, yet \$196 billion for Iraq. I said it before. This President gets up every morning in the White House, opens the window, looks outside and sees Iraq. He doesn't see America, because if he would see America, he would understand the American people across this Nation value so much the priorities he vetoed today.

Yesterday we celebrated Veterans Day. We acknowledged what the men and women who have served this country mean to us, our history, and our future. There were a lot of good speeches given by great politicians talking about how much we value our veterans. Those speeches had hardly been finished when the President returned to the White House to veto this bill.

This bill would have provided funding for employment and health programs for veterans. It is hard to believe in

America that one out of four homeless people is a veteran. You see them on the streets of your town, large and small; you see them standing on the highways with little cardboard signs. One out of four of them is a veteran. This bill tried to provide counseling, shelter, ways to give these veterans a place to sleep at night. The President vetoed it and said it was too darn much spending.

This bill would have provided \$228 million for veterans employment, \$9.5 million for traumatic brain injury, and \$23.6 million for the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Programs.

Last night on television I saw a program. James Gandolfini, who was the star of "The Sopranos," had a special documentary; I believe it was called "Alive Day." I think that was the name of it, but you couldn't miss it if you saw it because he invited veterans on this program to be interviewed, veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan who had been injured. These young men and women came and talked about their love of this country, their service to our Nation and what they had been through. This beautiful young woman who had been a lieutenant in the Army had a rocket-propelled grenade explode right next to her, tearing off her right arm and shoulder. She now has a prosthetic arm that appears to be real but of course does not even have function to it, but it is what she uses. It was a touching moment when she talked about what her future would be, this beautiful young woman, this disabled veteran.

There were many amputees—some of them double amputees—talking about trying to put their lives back together. Some of the most painful episodes involve victims of traumatic brain injury. There was one young man with his mother sitting next to him. They showed before pictures, when he was a hard-charging soldier, happy go lucky and a lot of fun, who then sustained a serious traumatic brain injury and now is in a wheelchair. He hopes the day will come when he can once again walk and run. It is hard to imagine we could give tribute to those veterans yesterday and veto a bill today that would have spent just \$9.5 million for traumatic brain injury programs, but the President did that this morning.

The President came to Washington and said he wanted to be the education President. We remember it well because he came up with a new term we hadn't heard before called No Child Left Behind; he persuaded leaders on both sides of the aisle to vote for it and produced a new education program for America. This bill provided money to make that program work. It is not enough to identify the problems in our schools and the difficulties facing our children and our students; you need help to make certain you have the best teachers in the classroom, the proper class size, the right equipment at the school.

We also understand early childhood education is essential for kids to suc-

ceed. Show me a family where the mom and dad focus on teaching that child to read and read to the child and take the child out and speak to them in adult terms and I will show you a child probably destined to be pretty good in kindergarten. A lot of kids don't have that good fortune; mom and dad are off to work. So the Head Start Program is a way to give them a fighting chance. The bill the President vetoed today included more than \$7 billion for the Head Start Program, increasing it by \$200 million from last year. The President said we can't afford to increase the Head Start Program.

The bill also included \$18 billion for higher education initiatives and student financial aid. How many working families do you know with a child they want to see go to the best school in America, struggling with the idea of how they will pay for it and the debt they will carry out of school? We put money in this bill to help those families help those students, and the President said we can't afford it.

The President's budget would have provided title I funds for 117,000 fewer students and cut the number of new teachers in classrooms by 8,000. So the President says it is wasteful for us to provide title I funds to help children from disadvantaged families—117,000 more—and new teachers and classrooms by 8,000. At the same time, he wants \$196 billion for a war in Iraq not paid for.

In Illinois, almost 3,500 students will be left behind by the President's veto, and 200 teachers will not be hired. Will that be better for those schools, those families, those children? Of course not.

The appropriations bill the President vetoed also included \$11.3 billion for special ed, kids with special challenges who need special help and with that help have a chance to succeed. The President said we spend too much money on those kids and he vetoed it.

Had Congress provided what the President requested, Federal funding for disabled children would be lower by an average of \$117 per child. I have been in schools with special education classes, and I have watched the special care those children need and receive, often one-on-one help. If that teacher is caring and competent, the child has a chance—just a chance—to come out of the shadows of darkness and have a future. That is what this bill is about—a bill the President says America cannot afford.

In the area of health care—this is one I think touches me and most people—we included \$29 billion for medical research at 27 institutes and centers at the National Institutes of Health. Senator MIKULSKI knows all about this. This is in her neck of the woods in Maryland. The National Institutes of Health and what they achieve, we put in this bill \$29 billion and included \$1.4 billion more than the President requested for medical research at NIH.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, would the Senator from Illinois yield for a question?

Mr. DURBIN. I am happy to yield.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Is the Senator aware the President's budget actually cut NIH by \$310 million? He cut the National Institutes of Health projects by \$310 million, wiping out research opportunities for those young scientists with breakthrough ideas, as well as those which were ready for advancements; is the Senator aware of that?

Mr. DURBIN. I am aware of it. I will tell my colleagues the Senator from Maryland probably recalls that over the last 10 years or so, this has kind of been an area of real bipartisan cooperation. We may fight like cats and dogs over everything else, but we said: Come on, when it comes to the National Institutes of Health and medical research, Democrats get sick and Republicans get sick, too, and our kids do as well, so let's all join hands and promise we are going to increase the spending for medical research, not just to find the cures but also, as the Senator from Maryland says, to build up the infrastructure of talented professionals who will devote their lives to this medical research. The President says: No, we can't afford it.

Madam President, \$1.4 billion, we can't afford to spend \$1.4 billion more on cancer research, heart disease, diabetes, Parkinson's, Alzheimer's? We can't afford that? Well, for \$12 billion to \$15 billion a month, we can obviously afford a war in Iraq, but the President can't find money for the war against disease and death in this country. That is truly unfortunate.

Since I see my colleague from Maryland, I will surrender the floor and give her a chance to speak. I hope this veto today will not go unnoticed. Elections have consequences. In the last election, the American people said: We are going to give you—the Democrats—a majority in the Senate and a majority in the House. Now do something with it.

We have tried. We have succeeded in many areas. But we have run into the opposition of this President more often than not. When we tried to change the course and policy of the war in Iraq, the President used his first veto as President of the United States to veto on foreign policy, to veto that decision. When we tried to change his horrendous decision to stop medical research involving stem cells, he used his veto pen again. When we tried to provide children's health insurance for millions of kids across America who are not poor enough to qualify for Medicaid but not lucky enough to have health insurance in their family, he used his veto pen again. He used it again today.

Why is it a recurring theme that we see this President stopping efforts by this Democratic Congress to address the issues people care about: Health care, making sure we have the best; medical research to find those cures; making sure our schools are preparing the next generation of leaders; making certain that as a country, we move forward in providing health insurance protection for kids. It is a sad moment.

I hope the House of Representatives can rally the votes to override that veto. I hope a few of our Republican friends who joined us in passing this bill, with over 70 votes, if I am not mistaken—I think close to 75 votes—I hope they will stand with us again and override this President's veto—a mistake, a mistake this President made at the expense of America's families.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland is recognized.

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the pending amendments on the farm bill be laid aside and that I be allowed to speak on two important amendments that I will offer at an appropriate time.

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

Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, today I rise to speak about two very important amendments. I will ask for a vote on both of these amendments at an appropriate time. The first amendment requires the U.S. Government to label any food that comes from a cloned animal or its progeny. The second amendment would increase food safety because I will ask for three studies on the impact of cloned products in our food supply—the impact on trade, the impact on the economy, and the impact on health.

But let me talk about the fundamental problem. See this picture up here? This is Dolly. You remember Dolly, the cloned lamb that burst onto the scene? Dolly is cloned. She has gone from a novelty to a biotech product, to possibly Dolly burger in your food supply. So we have gone from: Hello Dolly, who are you, to being on the verge of having Dolly burgers in our school lunch program, maybe Dolly Braunschweiger in our Meals on Wheels program. Why are we on the verge of doing that? It is because the FDA said it is OK. You remember the FDA. They said OK to Vioxx. They said OK to a lot of things.

It seems, in December of 2006, the FDA announced that milk and meat products from cloned animals are safe for human consumption. Now, I have very serious doubts about that, but I am not a scientist, so I want more science and more research. Most Americans agree with me, that scientists should be able to monitor cloned animals as they enter the food supply. To my dismay, FDA has refused to label cloned food. I believe people have a right to know and a right to make their own decisions.

The American people find cloned food disturbing. A Gallup poll reports over 60 percent of Americans think it is immoral to clone animals. My bill doesn't deal with morality. My bill deals with: When you eat it, you know where it came from. Consumers have a right to know. They have no way to tell if the food comes from a cloned animal, the cloned animal's progeny, such as Dolly, or if it comes from a cow, a pig, a chicken. I want the public to be informed.

I am for consumer choice. If most Americans don't want cloned milk and meat, they should not be required to eat it. I cannot stop the cloning of animals. Maybe that would not be a good idea. I cannot stop the FDA from approving it. I don't believe in meddling at that level. But I can insist on labeling. And if it enters your food supply, whether you buy it at the supermarket or whether you are in a restaurant or whether it is going to be in the child's school lunch program or your elder parents' Meals on Wheels program, you ought to know about it. My amendment would require labeling by the FDA and the Department of Agriculture, to put a label on all food from cloned animals that says this product is from a cloned animal or its progeny. These labels would be at the wholesale level, retail level, or restaurant level, or wherever the U.S. Government acts in calling it nutrition. It would allow the American people to make an informed decision on what they are eating.

You would think I am creating Armageddon. The BioTrade Association has been all over me with the functional equivalent of cleats, running editorial boards, and whispering science as they know it into the ears of the ed boards. If they have such confidence that cloned food is OK, why would they care if it were labeled? If they had such confidence that the American people would be indifferent to labeling, why would they oppose it?

They say it will cost too much. Guess what. They said it about nutritional labeling. They said that about other forms of labeling on our food. I reject those arguments. I believe you want to know this. I really believe you want to know if you are eating cloned food.

Madam President, you know me. You know I am one of the people in the Senate who has stood fairly on the side of science, the technology advancements it brings and the need always for more research. I believe we need more research into what this means. What is the impact and consequence on public health, on individual health, on unborn children, which I know is a great concern to many of our colleagues here? We don't know. Are we going to wake up and, instead of fetal alcohol problems, have the impact of cloned food? I don't know that.

My second amendment would require three studies: a health impact study on cloned foods and do more of it; an economic impact to the United States from adding cloned food to our food supply; a foreign trade impact on exporting food made in the United States from cloned animals.

My amendment also requires scientific peer review of the FDA's decision to improve scientific rigor. It would eliminate and assure there were no conflicts of interest. Many studies done with cloned food were done with the supporters of cloning, and those who would profit from cloning. The FDA received over 13,000 comments

when it released its initial decision that food from cloned animals is safe. Many of these comments said more information is needed. Scientists said there is more information needed. The public said more information is needed. I believe we need to listen to the National Academy of Sciences, which is the premier adviser to the Congress and the people on this.

The National Academy of Sciences agrees that cloning is a brand-new science. There may be unknown and unintended consequences. These scientists recommend this technology be monitored and urge postmarket surveillance. You cannot have postmarket surveillance unless it is labeled. If it is mixed in with your food, you won't be able to do this.

The FDA tells us that once they determined cloned food is safe, they would allow it to enter the market. The scientists want this labeling. I believe we are going down a difficult path. In Europe, they call this type of food "Frankenfood." Cloned beef is having a hard time in the marketplace. Do we want the EU to ban all American food products because the people are worried about "Frankenfood" and are worried that this "Frankenfood" has been mingled with the other food? Essentially, they could ban all exports of meat products there. I don't want to hear one more thing coming from the EU that says they don't want to buy our beef or lamb because they are worried that it is "Frankenfood."

Again, I am worried about it. How about having an amendment that mandates a study on the trade impacts?

I also believe in science and research. I believe, therefore, we need to mandate a study now and follow a scientific program based on sound science. Were they accurate? Were they impartial? Were they free of conflict of interest? What additional research needs to be done? We need to be able to also look at the impact on our economy. Are we running a shortage in beef, lamb, and so on, so that we have to go to cloned animals? I don't think so. It seems to be readily available in the American marketplace. I don't know why we need to do this.

People say, well, don't you believe in the FDA? I do. The FDA is in my State. Over a thousand dedicated men and women work there every day. What I also know is that the FDA has been making some pretty big mistakes. They have been making mistakes in their food supply. They cannot stand sentry over spinach and E. coli in our own country. How are they going to monitor Dolly as she makes her way into our food supply? They don't even have enough people to keep an eye on E. coli spreading in spinach in our own country. What about the food coming in from other countries that we don't seem to be able to stand sentry over?

The FDA has not had enough resources in the food supply area. Then they say: Don't worry, honey, we will take care of you. We learned that line

a long time ago and we know how false it was. The FDA, I believe, needs more help. They need more research. They need more monitoring, and this is why I am for labeling. Labeling would tell us where these foods go. It would give us the ability to have postmarket surveillance to look at the consequences, some of which might be OK and some of which might be quite questionable. So all I am saying is give the public a right to know and let's do more studies.

I don't know about Dolly. She looks so sad here in this photo, doesn't she? I don't know if she is happy that she is a clone, and I don't know if she is sad that she is a clone. I know whatever happens to Dolly, and whatever breakthrough comes from cloning—and maybe there are wonderful things that I don't know about. I do know that when I sit down on my heart-smart program and bite into a nice juicy roll, I want to know whether I am eating beef, lamb, or a Dolly burger. So my amendment simply says: Give me the right to know; otherwise, I will take further steps to say bah, bah to Dolly burgers.

Madam President, I 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. BYRD. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

PRESIDENTIAL VETO

Mr. BYRD. Madam President, today the President, our President, demonstrated once again that he values political posturing more than making America a safer, healthier, more economically strong nation.

This morning, President Bush vetoed a bipartisan, fiscally responsible Labor-HHS-Education bill that increases funding for programs to improve student performance, makes college more affordable, supports lifesaving medical research, and provides relief for families coping with rising home heating costs.

The bill also provides money for veterans employment programs, homeless veterans, and research to help those veterans suffering from traumatic brain injuries.

The President, in an effort to convey the appearance of fiscal discipline, has threatened to veto 10 of the 12 appropriations bills—10 out of 12.

Today the President vetoed the Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill because Congress chose to increase funding by 5 percent. The hypocrisy of the President's political posturing became even more clear today. This morning, the President signed the Defense appropriations bill which provides a \$40 billion, or 10-percent, increase for the Department of Defense. Also, this morning, the President vetoed the Labor-HHS-Education bill be-

cause Congress chose to restore irresponsible and shortsighted cuts proposed by the President.

As part of the President's political message, he describes the 5-percent increase for Labor-HHS-Education programs as "bloated" spending. I call it responsible investments in research in cancer, heart disease, diabetes, in educating our children, in providing access to health care to rural America, and to heating the homes of low-income elderly Americans.

The President proposed to cut funding for the National Institutes of Health by \$279 million for studying cancer, diabetes, and heart disease. Under the President's budget, the National Institutes of Health would have to eliminate 717 research grants that could lead to cures or treatments for cancer, diabetes, Alzheimer's, and other diseases.

Congress restored those cuts and provided an increase of \$1.1 billion. I ask the question: Is increasing spending for the National Institutes of Health by 3.8 percent "bloated" spending? Is it? Of course not.

The President proposed over \$3 billion in cuts for educational programs, including special education, Safe and Drug-Free Schools, and improving teacher quality. Congress—that is—restored those cuts. Is increasing by 3 percent to educate our children bloated spending? I ask the question again. Congress restored those cuts. Is increasing funding by 3 percent to educate our children bloated spending? No.

The President proposed cuts of nearly \$1 billion from health programs, such as rural health, preventive health, nurse training, and mental health grants. Congress, on a bipartisan basis, restored those cuts. I ask the question: Is providing an increase of \$225 million for community health centers bloated spending? Is it? Certainly not.

The President—our President—proposed to cut low-income home energy assistance by \$379 million. Congress restored that cut and provided an increase of \$250 million. With the price of a barrel of oil reaching \$100, does anyone really think increasing low-income home energy assistance is bloated spending? No.

No Senator will be cold this winter. I will not be cold this winter. You on that side of the aisle will not be cold this winter. We on this side will not be cold this winter. No Senator will be cold at home this winter. The President will not be cold down at the White House. No. Yet the President wants Congress to slash such assistance.

President Bush's Budget Director, Jim Nussle, with whom I met several weeks ago, indicated he would be prepared to negotiate in good faith with Congress over our differences in spending. To my dismay—to my dismay—Director Nussle has not reached out to the leadership of the Appropriations Committees in the House and the Senate in a genuine effort to find common ground.

Now, what is the problem? Why, Mr. President, why, Mr. Nussle, is the \$40 billion increase for the Department of Defense fiscally responsible while a \$6 billion increase to educate our children and improve the health of our citizens bloated spending?

Now, let's stop—please, let's stop—this charade of political gamesmanship. I say this most respectfully to our President. Let's move forward for the good of the American people. They deserve more from their elected officials.

I suggest to this White House that it stop its intransigence and help us—the elected Representatives of the people in Congress—to enact this vital legislation. Let's sit down together and work out the problems in this bill. Providing for our people's needs should not be a game of us versus them. It should not be a Republican White House versus a Democratic conference. People's lives should not be fodder for ego-driven political games.

Homeless veterans, veterans in need of health care, children in need of education, these must not become the target in a foolish game of kickball. I urge this White House—I plead with this White House—to sit down with the Congress and address the growing unmet needs in this country. If we can build schools and hospitals in Iraq, we can certainly provide health care and education for our own citizens. Nobody wins in a game of chicken, and surely the White House can and ought to work with us—in Congress—to stop this charade.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I ask to speak for up to 7 minutes in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. NELSON of Nebraska). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, November voters in my State of Ohio spoke out for change. They spoke out for a very different and new set of priorities in Washington, priorities that match their own priorities and their own values back home.

Heeding their calls earlier this year, Congress raised the minimum wage, passed potentially lifesaving stem cell legislation, voted to expand access for health insurance to literally 4 million low-income children, and last week, Congress sent to the President the Labor, Health and Human Services bill for his signature, a bipartisan bill that was filled with our national priorities. That bill would increase funding for Head Start and Pell grants and programs that benefit our Nation's veterans.

Earlier today, once again, the President made it clear that this administration and its supporters do not share the priorities of America's middle class. He vetoed lifesaving stem cell legislation, he vetoed expanding access to children's health insurance, and he, today, vetoed the bipartisan bill for Head Start, to give preschool kids a chance. He vetoed the legislation that

included Pell grants to give middle-class working families, working-class kids an opportunity to go to college without a huge, onerous burden on them when they leave college. And he vetoed legislation that would matter to our Nation's veterans.

Today's veto was a veto of middle-class families and a veto of our values as a nation. The Labor, Health and Human Services bill funds the priorities that matter most in Ohio and across the Nation—more funding to help low-income children get the best possible start in school, more funding for students hoping to realize their American dream, more funding for programs to help our Nation's veterans with job training, with college costs, and to help with the all too serious issue of traumatic brain injury.

The day after Veterans Day, the day set aside to honor our Nation's veterans, the President vetoed legislation that would benefit those who have sacrificed so much for our great country. That, Mr. President, is unacceptable.

Yesterday, in Cleveland, at the Wade Park Veterans Hospital, I spent the afternoon with veterans from northeast Ohio, listening to them and their concerns. I learned that they need more, not less, assistance from the Federal Government. I heard from a former Ohio National Guardsman living in Jefferson, OH, not far from Ash-tabula. Before being deployed to Iraq, he was an engineer and his wife was the vice president of a local company. After being injured in Iraq by an IED, he returned home suffering from a traumatic brain injury, a spinal cord injury, and post-traumatic stress disorder. Unable to work full time because of his injuries, this former National Guardsman, who worked full time before he left, now had to rely on disability compensation to support his family. His wife Julie had to leave her job to care full time for her child and for her husband. His care requires four trips weekly to the nearest VA hospital, a trip of about 110 miles each way.

I heard from a reservist, CPL Anthony Niederiter, of Euclid, OH, who was deployed to Iraq in 2005. Corporal Niederiter shared stories about the need for a better system that helps our military men and women return to civilian life after serving our country. The confusing transition process has caused veteran after veteran to miss filing deadlines for health benefits and educational opportunities.

One veteran, one soldier, told me after he left the military, he applied for dental benefits 32 or 33 days after he left the military. But he found out if you don't apply within 30 days, they are not available. Nobody told him that. Others have been denied educational benefits because they didn't follow the right rules because nobody told them that when they left the military.

Too many commanding officers, after these troops are used up and of no

value anymore to the military, just wash their hands of them and look to the next class of military recruits they are going to send off to war, not informing those who are leaving, those who have served their country—frankly, not caring enough to make sure those veterans, those soldiers leaving the Armed Forces have been notified and told of their rights and the benefits they are able to receive—education, health care, and the like.

I heard from Dr. John Schupp, a Cleveland State University professor, who emphasized the importance of doing more, not less, for our veterans. Dr. Schupp founded the SERV Program, a two-semester program at Cleveland State University designed just for veterans. The program helps veterans apply for GI bill benefits, offers veterans-only classes that help ease the transition back into the classroom for many veterans who have not been in a classroom for 6, 8, 10 years or longer. He works with veterans to navigate VA issues and offers a veteran-to-veteran mentoring program.

Mr. President, we need more programs like this. Dr. Schupp's involvement, his brainchild, his program—much of this should be done by the Department of Defense before our soldiers, our marines, and our sailors leave government or military service. Dr. Schupp has taken up the slack, frankly, for much that hasn't been done. We need more programs like this, not just in Ohio but across our great country.

We need more Federal investment in our Nation's veterans. We must continue to honor our heroes from World War II and Korea and Vietnam, while finding ways to care for the new generation of veterans returning from Afghanistan and Iraq—and Kosovo, as one of the veterans came from yesterday. As more and more veterans return from these overseas engagements, especially from Afghanistan and Iraq, we must ensure that this growing group has access to the best care and the best benefits available. They have earned them.

Congress cannot simply wait to correct problems that arise. We can, we must anticipate those problems and address them now, not later. Providing care and support for Ohio's veterans is a moral obligation. Instead of vetoes, our veterans deserve, from their Government, the support they have earned. Congress can start by overriding the veto of the Labor-Health and Human Services appropriations bill.

I strongly encourage my colleagues to stand up for middle-class families, stand up for our communities, stand up for our workers, and to stand up, importantly, for our Nation's veterans. I strongly encourage my colleagues to override this veto.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CARDIN). Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senator is recognized to speak as in morning business, without objection.

GLOBAL WARMING

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. President, as a member of the Senate environmental committee, and also on the Energy Committee, it is my view that the time is long overdue for Congress to go beyond deal-making and politics as usual in addressing the crisis of global warming. The droughts, the floods, and the severe weather disturbances our planet is already experiencing will only get worse, potentially impacting billions of people, if we do not take bold and decisive action in the very near future.

While the Lieberman-Warner cap-and-trade bill is a strong step forward—and I applaud both Senators and I applaud Senator BARBARA BOXER for her entire leadership on global warming—it is my view that legislation as currently written does not go anywhere near far enough in creating the policies the scientific community says we must develop in order to avert a planetary catastrophe.

This legislation is also lacking in paving the way for the transformation of our energy system, away from fossil fuels into energy efficiency and sustainable energy technologies.

Here are some of my concerns about the Lieberman-Warner bill. These are concerns I will be working on in the next number of weeks, trying to improve that legislation. First, virtually all the scientific evidence tells us, at the least, we must reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 80 percent by the year 2050, if we stand a chance to reverse global warming. Unfortunately, the Lieberman-Warner bill, as currently written, under the very best projections, provides a 63-percent reduction. In other words, under the best projections, this bill does not go far enough, according to the scientific community, in giving us a chance to reverse global warming. Secondly, this legislation allows major polluters to continue emitting greenhouse gases for free until the year 2036. In fact, old-fashioned, dirty coal-burning plants could still be built during this period. That is wrong. The right to pollute should not be given away for up to 26 years. Further, in calculating emission reductions, this bill relies much too heavily on “offsets,” a process which is difficult to verify and which could lead to the underreporting of emission reductions.

Third, this bill provides a massive amount of corporate welfare to industries that have been major emitters of greenhouse gases, while requiring minimal performance standards and accountability for these same industries. According to a recent report published by Friends of the Earth, the auction and allocation processes of the bill could generate up to \$3.6 trillion over a

40-year period. While a large fund does exist in the bill for “low carbon technology,” there is no guaranteed allocation for such important technologies as wind, solar, geothermal, hydrogen or for energy efficiency. But there is a guaranteed allotment of \$324 billion over a 40-year period for the coal industry through an advanced coal sequestration program and \$232 billion for advanced technology vehicles.

The time is late. If Congress is serious about preventing irreversible damage to our planet because of global warming, we need to get our act together. We need to move in a bold and focused manner. Not only are the people of our country looking to us to do that, but so are countries all over the world. The good news is, we can do it.

As Members will recall, in 1941, President Roosevelt and the Congress began the process of rearming America to defeat Naziism and Japanese imperialism. Within a few short years, we had transformed our economy and started producing the tanks and bombs and planes and guns needed to defeat Nazism. We did it because of the leadership of Roosevelt and the Congress. In 1961, President Kennedy called upon our Nation to undertake the seemingly impossible task of sending a man to the Moon. Working with Congress, NASA was greatly expanded. The best scientists and engineers in this country and in the world were assembled to focus on the task. Billions of dollars were appropriated and, in 1969, as we all remember with great pride, Neil Armstrong stepped foot on the Moon. We did it. There was a challenge. We stepped up to the plate. We did it.

As a result of global warming, the challenge we face today is no less daunting and no less consequential. Quite the contrary. Now we are fighting for the future of the planet and the well-being of billions of people in every corner of the world. Once again, if we summon the political courage, I have absolutely no doubt the United States of America can lead the world in resolving this very dangerous crisis. We can do it.

In that context, let me take a moment to suggest some ways we can strengthen the Lieberman-Warner bill—and I look forward to working with those Senators and the entire committee—to aggressively reverse global warming. Most importantly, significant resources in this bill must be explicitly allocated for energy efficiency and sustainable energy, the areas where we can get the greatest and quickest bang for the buck. In terms of energy efficiency, my home city of Burlington, VT—and I have the honor of having been mayor of that city from 1981 to 1989—despite strong economic growth, consumes no more electricity today than it did 16 years ago because of a successful citywide effort on the part of our municipally owned electric company to make our homes, offices, schools, and buildings all over the city more energy efficient.

That is what we did in Burlington, VT. In California, which has a strong and growing economy, electric consumption per person has remained steady over the last 20 years because of that State’s commitment to energy efficiency. In other words, in Burlington, VT, and the State of California—and I am sure in other communities around the country—despite economic growth, the consumption of electricity does not have to go soaring, if we invest in energy efficiency, if we rally the people to not waste energy.

Numerous studies tell us that by retrofitting older buildings and by establishing strong energy efficiency standards for new construction, we can cut fuel and electric consumption by at least 40 percent. If we want to save energy, that is how we do it. Those savings will increase with such new technologies as LED light bulbs, which consume 1/10th the electricity of an incandescent bulb, while lasting 20 years. These LED light bulbs are on the verge of getting on the market. We have to facilitate that process and get them all over the country as soon as we possibly can.

In terms of saving energy in transportation, it is beyond my comprehension that we are driving automobiles today which get the same mileage per gallon—25 miles per gallon—as cars in this country did 20 years ago. Think of all the technology, all of the changes. Yet we are driving cars today which get the same mileage per gallon as was the case 20 years ago. That is absurd. If Europe and Japan can average over 44 miles per gallon, we can do at least as well. Simply raising CAFE standards to 40 miles per gallon—less than the Europeans, less than the Japanese—will save more oil than we import from Saudi Arabia. How about that? That makes a lot of sense.

Further, we should also be rebuilding and expanding our decaying rail and subway systems and making sure energy-efficient buses are available in rural America so travelers have an alternative to the automobile. Everybody knows the state of the rail system in America today is absolutely unacceptable, way behind Europe, way behind Japan. Subways in large cities need an enormous amount of work. In rural States such as Vermont, there are communities that have virtually no public transportation at all. We have to address that crisis, if we are serious about global warming.

In terms of sustainable energy, the other area we can make tremendous leaps forward, wind power is now the fastest growing source of new energy in the world and in the United States, but we have barely begun to tap its potential. In Denmark, for example, 20 percent of the electricity is produced by wind. We, as a Congress, should be supporting wind energy, not only through the creation of large wind farms in the appropriate areas but through the production of small inexpensive wind turbines which can be used in homes and

farms all across rural America. These small turbines can produce up to half the electricity an average home consumes and are now—right now, forget the future—reasonably priced. Without Federal tax credits, which are available, without rebates such as what is being done in California today, a 1.8-kilowatt turbine is now being sold for some \$12,000, including installation, with a payback of 5 to 6 years. That is a pretty good deal. If you are not worried about global warming, if you are not worried about carbon emissions, it is a good deal because you are going to save money on your electric bill.

The possibilities for solar energy are virtually unlimited. In Germany, a quarter of a million homes are now producing electricity through rooftop photovoltaic units, and the price per kilowatt is rapidly declining. In California, that State is providing strong incentives so 1 million homes will have photovoltaic rooftop units in the next 10 years. But the potential for solar energy goes far beyond rooftop photovoltaic units. Right now in the State of Nevada, a solar plant is generating 56 megawatts of electricity. What we are now beginning to see developed in the Southwestern part of the country are solar plants which are capable of producing enormous amounts of electricity. According to the National Renewable Energy Laboratory of the U.S. Department of Energy:

Solar energy represents a huge domestic energy resource for the United States, particularly in the Southwest where the deserts have some of the best solar resource levels in the world. For example, an area approximately 12% the size of Nevada (15% of federal lands in Nevada) has the potential to supply all of the electric needs of the United States.

Whether that area can in fact supply all the electric needs of the United States, I don't know. But I have recently, in the last couple weeks, talked to people who are involved in these solar plants. They say in the reasonably near future, they can supply 20 percent of the electricity our country needs. There it is, sitting there, ready to happen. Our job is to facilitate that process and make it happen sooner rather than later.

Perhaps most significantly, Pacific Gas & Electric, which to my understanding is the largest electric utility in the country based in California, has recently signed a contract with Solel, an Israeli company, to build a 535-megawatt plant in the Mohave Desert. This plant, which should be operating in 4 years—my understanding is they are going to break ground in 2, and it should be operating in 4 years—will have an output equivalent to a small nuclear powerplant and will produce electricity for some 400,000 homes. This is not a small-time operation. The people I talked to involved in this industry say this is the beginning. Think of what we can do if we provided them with the support they need.

Most importantly, people say: Well, that is a good idea, but unfortunately

this electricity is going to be sky high, very expensive.

That is not the case. The price of the electricity generated by this plant to be online in 4 years is competitive with other fuels today and will likely be much cheaper than other fuels in the future.

News reports indicate that the 25-year purchase agreement signed by Pacific Gas and Electric with Solel calls for electricity to be initially generated at about 10 cents per kilowatt, with very minimal increases over the next 25 years—minimal increases because this is a process that does not have all that many moving parts. There it is. It needs maintenance. It needs work. But, unlike gas, unlike oil, you are not looking at a volatile market. There is the Sun. It will shine. So we are talking about a price over a 25-year period which probably will end up being less than 15 cents a kilowatt in the year 2035, which I suspect will be not only very competitive, it will be more than competitive.

The potential for solar plants in the Southwest is extremely strong. While there certainly is no magical silver bullet in the production of new, non-polluting energy sources, experts tell us we can build dozens of plants in the Southwest, and that this one nongreenhouse gas-emitting source could provide a huge amount of the electricity our country needs.

Geothermal energy is another source of sustainable energy that has huge potential. Mr. President, as you know, geothermal energy is the heat from deep inside the Earth. It is free, it is renewable, and it can be used for electricity generation and direct heating. While geothermal is available at some depth everywhere, it is most accessible in Western States where hydrothermal resources are at shallow depths.

Currently, the United States has approximately 2,900 megawatts of installed capacity, which is just 5 percent—5 percent—of the renewable electricity generation in the United States. The installed geothermal capacity is already expected to double in the near term with projects that are under development, but this is just the tip of the iceberg.

A recent report for the U.S. Department of Energy by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, MIT, suggests that geothermal could provide 100,000 megawatts of new carbon-free electricity at less than 10 cents per kilowatt hour, comparable to costs for clean coal. Drilling technology from the petroleum industry is the key to unlocking this huge potential. Enhanced geothermal systems tap energy from hot impermeable rocks that are between 2 and 6 miles below the Earth's crust.

So geothermal is another opportunity for us as a nation to be producing large amounts of energy in a way that does not emit carbon dioxide and does not create greenhouse gases.

An investment of \$1 billion—less than the price of one coal-fired power-

plant—could make this resource commercially viable within 15 years. The potential payoff is huge. It is estimated that electricity from geothermal sources can provide 10 percent of the U.S. base-load energy needs in 2050.

In terms of the future—in terms of the future of our planet—the bad news is that scientists are now telling us they have underestimated the speed and destructive aspects of global warming.

As you remember, Mr. President, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which recently won the Nobel Peace Prize, along with former Vice President Al Gore—many of those scientists are now saying their projections were too conservative, that the planet is warming faster than they had anticipated, and the damage will be greater if we do not move boldly to reverse it. That is the bad news.

There is good news, however. The good news is that, at the end of the day, we know how to reverse global warming. We know what to do. What is lacking now is not the scientific knowledge, though more and more knowledge will come, and it is not the technology, though more and more technology will be developed, and sustainable energy will become less and less expensive. But after all is said and done, we know what we have to do. We know how to make our homes and our transportation systems more energy efficient. We are now making great progress in driving down the cost of nonpolluting, sustainable energy technologies. That is what we are doing.

What is lacking now is the political will—the political will to think outside of the box, the political will to envision a new energy system in America which is not based on fossil fuels, the political will to stand up to powerful special interests that are more concerned about their profits than about the well-being of our planet.

So I think not only the children—the young people of our country and the people all over America—but people throughout the world want this Congress to catch up to where they are. They are far ahead of where we are. I think if we have the courage to do the right thing here, we can reverse global warming. In the process, we can create millions of good-paying jobs, we can help restore our position in the international community as a country that is leading and not following on this issue of huge consequence.

Mr. President, I yield back the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll of the Senate.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. BOXER. 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 California is recognized.

Mrs. BOXER. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

Mr. President, I thank Senator HARKIN because I know he is going to be speaking shortly, and I wanted to follow Senator SANDERS.

As the Chair of the Environment Committee, I was very interested in his presentation. I thank him for caring so deeply about global warming. The thing we have to do around here is get a good bill down to the floor. Because everything Senator SANDERS talks about—geothermal, solar—everything he talks about—green jobs—depends on our ability to get a good bill to the floor of the Senate.

What also is interesting is that Senator SANDERS called the Lieberman-Warner bill a very strong bill. I agree with him. It is a very strong bill. And that is before we even make some perfecting amendments out of subcommittee.

I think it is interesting, it is the evening time now. Senator HARKIN is on the floor, and Senator CARDIN is the Presiding Officer. Senator HARKIN is a cosponsor of the Lieberman-Warner bill. Senator HARKIN is truly a great conservationist, as we are going to hear from him. He gave a presentation to us at our caucus lunch that showed how deeply committed he is to this country's environment.

The fact that he is on the Lieberman-Warner bill gave a great lift and a great boost to that piece of legislation. Mr. CARDIN, the Senator from Maryland, sitting in the chair, our Presiding Officer, has played a tremendous role already in moving forward the legislation if we are going to address global warming.

There is not any question that the ravages of global warming are around the corner. Is it going to be 20 years? Is it going to be 10 years? Do we already see it? Some say yes—in Darfur, in some of the weather patterns, in some of the fires, in some of the floods, in some of the droughts—because the scientists tell us that unfettered global warming will lead to extremes in weather. So it is coming down the track right at us.

We have some options in this Senate as to what we are going to do about it. We can hold out for the “perfect” bill. I can say, as someone who wrote a bill with Senator Jeffords, and then Senator SANDERS: Oh, I know which bill is perfect for me; it is the bill I wrote. I know my friends in the Senate each could take their turn at writing a bill, and that bill would be “perfect” for that Senator. But this is a legislative body, and if you have 100 “perfects,” and we cannot agree to come together on a very good bill, we get nothing done.

I would suggest that for those who, very well-intentioned, decide to turn their back on a very good bill because it is not their idea of “perfect,” I think that is an irresponsible position to find yourself in. I feel very strongly about that.

There is much about the Lieberman-Warner bill I am going to work to

strengthen in the full committee. If the bill gets to the floor, I am going to work hard to strengthen it. But I know, as long as it is a very strong bill, we need to move it forward.

So we could hold out for the “perfect.” That is very dangerous because that leads to no bill. And no bill—doing nothing about global warming in the face of all the science—would be very irresponsible.

The next thing we could do is have a bill that is very weak. I think a very weak bill is dangerous because people will think, “Oh, they have taken care of global warming,” when, in fact, we have not. You may be stuck with a weak bill, and you cannot strengthen it, so that is a problem too.

So it seems to me we could hold out for the “perfect,” and that means no bill, we could have a dangerously weak bill, which is a very bad option, or we could have a very good bill. We know that. We have people who are saying: Wait a minute, this bill, Lieberman-Warner, is too weak. We heard some of that on the floor tonight. It is too weak. I want an 80-percent cut in 2050, and it is 65 percent. So is the solution to do nothing? I say no. Then we have many people on the other side who say this bill is too strong. It is kind of like the three bears—what is just right?

I think what is just right is a very strong bill that moves us forward, that asserts the real dangers of global warming, and we know what that is: sea level rise. Those of us who went to Greenland saw what could happen if that sheet melts. We could see huge increases in sea level for all of us who represent coastal States, and the whole country and the world will suffer. The intelligence community, the Department of Defense—they are saying to us: With a few feet rise in sea level, we are going to have refugee problems, we are going to have every problem in the world. So the fact is, we can't turn our backs.

We had a hearing on the public health implications of unfettered global warming. The star witness was the head of the CDC, Julie Gerberding, Dr. Gerberding. She is the top doc of the country. She had very strong views that we have to look at the public health impacts. For example, what is going to happen to our elderly when heat levels rise and they can't seek refuge? What is going to happen to our children when they are swimming in lakes and streams and rivers and those bodies of water are so warm that dangerous amoebas live in those waters? What is going to happen to them? What is going to happen to the people of the world when they can't get the food they need?

So what happened was the White House redacted page after page of their own head of the CDC—they redacted page after page of their own head of the CDC. Her testimony was redacted. When we wrote and asked for it, the answer came back from the White House Counsel: Oh, no, we couldn't pos-

sibly send you this. This is a breach of executive privilege and the rest.

Can you believe, Mr. President, that the people of this country who pay the taxes for the CDC employees cannot hear what the top doc has to say about the ravages—the potential ravages—of global warming? This is what we are facing. Yet we see signs that the people who think our bill doesn't go far enough are going to team up with the people who want to kill this legislation. What a tragedy that would be. And who loses? The people of the United States of America. These new technologies that are going to save us, the ones Senator SANDERS talked about—he talked with great passion about solar and wind and all the rest—you are not going to get it, folks, unless you have a bill that puts a price on carbon. If you hold out for your version of the perfect, trust me, it isn't going to happen, and you give false hope to people—false hope to people.

So I would just say to my colleagues who may be listening that we have a golden opportunity in the Environment Committee. We have held more than 20 hearings on global warming. We have this bipartisan bill. We have gotten it through the subcommittee. We are working to make it better, get it through the full committee and onto the floor of the Senate, where we will see where people stand. We will have amendments that range from one extreme to the other, and we will see where people stand on global warming.

I would say to you, Mr. President, coming from a State that has done so much about this already, we are late to the game. We are late to the dance. We are late to the party. But we are not too late, unless everybody stands up and says: If I don't get it my way, then I will show you the highway. We have a lot of that going on already. We have a President who really won't talk to us about anything. He won't talk to us about Iraq; he won't meet us halfway there. He won't talk to us about CHIP; he won't meet us halfway there. He won't talk to us about education funding; he won't meet us halfway there. Won't, won't, won't, won't, won't. He vetoed the Water Resources Development Act. We overrode it. He still has never said he was wrong. There is too much of that. We in the Senate have to show that we are adult enough to admit that the perfect cannot be the enemy of the good, particularly when there is so much at stake.

So I am excited about the work of the Environment Committee, and I am so pleased we had a bipartisan breakthrough. I am so grateful to all the groups out there who are helping us, who are giving us the courage to move forward, because, believe me, special interests are going to be pounding us, pounding us, pounding us.

To wrap this up, there are always people who say no to the science. There are always people who say: Oh, no, HIV doesn't cause AIDS, I don't believe it.

There are always people who say cigarette smoking doesn't cause lung cancer. I am sure there were people who said to Jonas Salk: Your vaccine idea is just not going to work. We have to go with the consensus view, and we have it on our side. We know we have to act.

So it is going to be an exciting time in the Environment Committee. It is going to be an exciting time here on the floor when this legislation comes to the floor. I don't know exactly when that will happen, but it will happen, and when it does we will have a chance to fulfill our responsibility not just to our generation but to our kids' generations and our grandkids and future generations. I see young people sitting here on the floor of the Senate helping us out every day. Their generation has so much at stake.

I met with some young people from the UC system, UC Santa Cruz. They are going to 100 percent renewable energy to run UC Santa Cruz, and all of the different campuses, UC campuses, are going to try to do that. So whether we vote here or we don't vote here, the people are way ahead of us. How sad it is if we were to walk away from this challenge because it wasn't just right on page 102 or page 6. It is never going to be perfect, I say to my colleagues, but we have an obligation to come together. We did it with the Clean Water Act years ago, the Safe Drinking Water Act, and the Endangered Species Act. We have really moved forward, and we became a leader in the world. We are behind the world today, and the world is looking to us.

So I am excited about this challenge, and I thank Senator SANDERS for his passion, for coming down and making the case for solar energy, making the case for wind energy. But I will say to him and everyone else within the sound of my voice that it isn't going to happen unless this Congress sets up a cap-and-trade system with mandatory cuts in carbon. It just isn't going to happen the way it should.

Thank you very much, Mr. President, and I thank, Senator HARKIN for this time.

I yield the floor, and I note the absence of a quorum.

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

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, it is hard to believe, but we are on the farm bill. As any casual observer might notice, we are not doing anything. We sit here with an empty Chamber. The farm bill has now been on the floor for over a week. The farm bill was laid down a week ago yesterday, as a matter of fact, and nothing has happened. Why hasn't anything happened? Because we can't get anything from the other side.

We want to move ahead. We wanted to ask unanimous consent to go ahead with an amendment with a time limit, vote on it, and move to another amendment, but the other side refuses. The Republican leadership refuses to move ahead on the farm bill. I suggested earlier today that we may at least want to have some amendments up. We cannot get consent on the other side. So here we sit. At this rate, we may not have a farm bill.

We worked very hard on it this year. First, on the other side in the House, they got a farm bill passed early. We met and worked hard on it all summer long and worked with the Finance Committee to get extra funds to meet our obligations. I am checking on this right now, but I believe we had a record movement of a farm bill through our committee this year—a day and a half, a short day and a half.

Now, this is my seventh farm bill. I have never seen anything move that fast. It was the result of weeks and weeks and months and months of working with the other side, with everybody working together, hammering out agreements, before we brought it to the committee. That is a good way of doing things around here. You establish relationships, figure out what people need to make sure they take care of their constituents. We came out of committee with not one vote against the farm bill. That never happened before, either, to the best of my memory. We always have a split vote coming out of committee on the farm bill. So it took a day and a half to get it out.

I commend my ranking member, Senator CHAMBLISS, who worked very hard on his side to pull things together. I don't even know how many amendments we had in that day and a half—four, five, or six—not very many. We disposed of them; we either adopted them or not. When we voted the bill out, we didn't have one dissenting vote.

So you would think a bill such as that coming to the floor could be handled rapidly. But then we got here and we wanted to move it, so our majority leader, exercising his right as majority leader, said we will do this bill and we will do relevant amendments. If it is relevant to the farm bill, we will take all comers. Bring them all. That sounds good to me—open debate, open amendments. Bring on the amendments to the farm bill. But the other side said, no, they may have some extraneous amendments dealing with children's health care, estate taxes—I don't know what else. We may have had some on this side too. But we were agreeing that we would not take any non-relevant amendments, whether they were from Democrats or Republicans. I thought that was a pretty good way to proceed, to just focus on the farm bill. The Republican side said no.

We have been locked here for over a week. I say to my friends in farm country—farmers, ranchers, agribusiness, the suppliers, wholesalers, retailers,

shippers, those who sell seed, the elevator operators, fertilizer dealers, and those in the livestock industry, who want to know what the farm bill is like so they can plan ahead on whether they are going to milk more cows or fewer cows: Will the milk go to class A or class B? Will we feed more cattle or will we shift to feeding hogs? What is the lay of the land going to be? They need certainty. The livestock market is volatile as it is, but they need some certainty as to what we are going to do here. That is why we worked very hard to get the bill done, hopefully, by December, which is not unusual—except for the last farm bill when I was chairman at that time, the House was in Republican hands and the Senate was Democratic, and we got it through ahead of schedule. But for that one exception, every farm bill comes in late. That is just the nature of things around here, I guess. We usually get them done by December. The present farm bill is expired. We are now on a continuing resolution.

I say to my friends in farm and ranch country, you ought to be calling up the minority leadership and saying we ought to get this farm bill through. We have to get it through. But if we don't move soon, we will have an extension of the present farm bill. We will just extend it. All the work we have done this year will be for naught. We will have to pick it up again some other time. That may be what will happen because of the fact that we cannot get an agreement to move ahead. We are stuck here at 6:20 in the evening, and we have been on the bill 1 week with not one amendment. All we ask is for the other side to bring forth amendments, and we will get ours and start moving.

I know we are trying to work things out. After a while, my patience runs out. Next week, we have Thanksgiving. People want to go home for Thanksgiving. If we don't finish the farm bill this week, it is going to be hard to have a farm bill done before we go home for Christmas. I know what it is like after Thanksgiving when we come back. We have 3 weeks, and we have all our appropriations bills. I am chairman of one of the appropriations subcommittees. We have all that to do. We have the Iraq war funding to consider, and we have some tax bills. Everybody is going to want to get out of here and get home for Christmas.

I say to all those watching, if we don't get a farm bill done this week, it will be hard to get one done this year. Maybe we will have to go into next year sometime to get it done. I hope that doesn't happen, but here we sit with no action, and there are going to be other things to be brought up this week, such as conference reports.

So here we sit. I hope we can reach some agreement and move ahead rapidly. If we don't, it looks as if we may be in for a long continuing resolution on the farm bill—either into next year or beyond. I don't know when we can

finally get it done. But it is too important to just leave it go. We would like to get it done. Is there everything in the farm bill I would have wished for? No. Senator CHAMBLISS and every member of the committee could say the same thing. That is the art of compromise. This bill is a good compromise among all regions of the country. I hope we can move ahead.

I want to talk a little about one area of the farm bill about which I feel very passionate. Even though we have done some good things, we haven't done as much as we need to do, considering the enormity of what confronts us in terms of the loss of our soil, the pollution of our water and waterways, and the degradation of whole areas of this country because of intensive cropping or lack of good practices. We are facing a dire circumstance in this country where we are going to lose the productivity of our soil. Almost like global warming, it may reach a point where the scales have tipped so far that to get the productivity back, to clean up our waterways might be almost impossible or will cost so much money that we won't be able to do it.

All of the farmers I have fought for so hard over these last 32 years are what I call the front line of conservationists. Farmers and ranchers want to protect the soil. They want to leave it better for future generations. When you are caught between a rock and a hard place in terms of all of the input costs, what it costs to produce a crop, the demands on those crops, and some negative incentives in the system right now in terms of Government support to farming and ranching—you put all those together, and there is a counterpressure, if you will, from the Government and from society at large against the farmer being a good conservationist.

We are placing tremendous demands on our food and fiber producers in this country—tremendous demands—and, with the ethanol boom and others, even more demand for the productivity of our soil. So what is happening right now, in many cases, is we are pushing it to the limits and beyond the limits to what soil can carry and what our water can carry, and now we have to think about being really good conservationists, not on the scale of the individual farmer but on a national scale.

I wish to take some time to talk about conservation and what is happening in our country at large in terms of conservation and what is happening to our soil and water in America and why we have to do something about it and why little steps, little things aren't going to do it. We need some big steps, big interventions, just as we do on global warming. The previous two speakers talked about that. If we just tinker around the edges, it won't mean anything. It is the same with conservation. We need a national commitment to a conservation ethic to restore, renew, and preserve our waterways, our

soil, our wildlife habitats, and, yes, the source of our water. All that needs to be preserved.

I have some pictures I wanted to point to here, some charts to give an idea of what I am talking about. I will bet you, Mr. President, a lot of Americans have seen this first picture somewhere. Every school kid has seen it in a history book. It is reprinted time and time again in one of our periodical magazines, talking about the great Dust Bowl of the 1930s.

What was the Dust Bowl? It took place in the panhandles of Oklahoma, Texas, some in New Mexico, Colorado, Kansas, up into Nebraska, and stretching up into South Dakota. This is one of the famous pictures taken in Cimarron, OK, in 1936 in the Dust Bowl. You can see there is no grass, nothing. You can see that the top of the posts are covered with dust. And there is a farmer and his kids running to take shelter from yet another one of the dust storms. That was in Cimarron County.

The year before that, in 1935, under President Franklin Roosevelt, the Soil Conservation Act passed and the Soil Conservation Service began providing help and service to farmers on conservation.

The next picture shows what happened that year. This is another famous picture, of a dust cloud in Kansas. On April 14, 1935, a dust storm started in eastern Montana, western North Dakota, rumbled through South Dakota into Nebraska, across Kansas into Oklahoma and into Texas. This dust storm was called Black Sunday. It was the biggest dust storm ever. In fact, it was preceded the previous year by a dust storm that swept from west to east that dumped dust on New York City. New York City got so dark it had to turn on its lights. Ships at sea could not dock in New York City because of the dust.

There is a wonderful book that I recommend that was released last year. This book by Timothy Egan is called "The Worst Hard Time: The Untold Story of Those Who Survived the Great American Dust Bowl." I recommend this book.

First of all, it is a great read. He tells a wonderful story about the Dust Bowl, but he tells the history of the whole area and what happened in that area in the 1890s, 1900s, 1910s, 1920s, up to the 1930s. Here is what he said:

By some estimates, more than 80 million acres in the southern plains were stripped of topsoil.

Mr. President, 80 million acres.

In less than 20 years, a rich cover that had taken several thousand years to develop was disappearing day by day.

Eighty million acres of grassland turned over, grassland that he says in the book was laid down almost 20,000 years ago. As he said, this was land the buffalo couldn't hurt, the tornadoes, the fires, and the floods struck, but the grasslands stayed, and they came back year after year.

But then there was the land rush. That area was opened up to homesteaders. They came in with plows and new equipment. They plowed it all up, turned it over.

As one person said in Timothy Egan's book, he looked around and said: There is something wrong here; the wrong side is up. The dirt is up and the grass is down and the wind started blowing. And then came Black Sunday, April 14, 1935, the worst dust storm in recorded history. I don't mean in this century; I mean in recorded history, the worst dust storm ever.

Again, when people look at that picture and they read about Black Sunday, they say: That is all over with; we took care of that situation. But look at this next photograph: a dust storm, the same as you saw before, and this time with color photography. That is a dust storm in the same area in Kansas, taken last year. The same huge dust storms rumbling through the plains because we have, once again, stripped the soil bare, turned the wrong side up, and we lack good conservation practices.

Here is another picture. This one could have been in the thirties just as the first picture I showed, but this was taken in South Dakota last year. Here is a fence. We can barely see it. The top of the fence is almost covered, and it stretches as far as the eye can see. That is just dust and a few tumbleweeds. That is South Dakota last year.

I hope we can recall the lessons of the thirties and what putting marginal cropland in production will really cost us.

This farm bill will prohibit allowing newly broken native sod into the Crop Insurance Program. That is vitally important because you cannot be covered under the disaster provisions of this farm bill unless you buy crop insurance. So if you turn over native sod, you cannot get crop insurance on the newly broken land, and you will not get disaster payments, and you will not be eligible then for all the other programs. So there is a strong provision in this bill to at least save some of the native sod because history can and will and does repeat itself, as we have just shown.

That is the dust. Here is the water. This is a cornfield in my part of the country. We can see that it has rained, and there is water running off. It is running probably into a ditch, that ditch drains probably into a small stream, that small stream runs into a bigger river, and that river goes into either the Missouri River or the Mississippi River.

What happens is when this soil and water runs off, it is taking with it phosphorous, and it is taking with it nitrogen, washing down into the river. What happens to it? When it goes down river, it winds up down south of New Orleans. In this next photograph, the red area is called the hypoxic area, the dead zone in the mouth of the Mississippi. This picture was taken by satellite this year. That area in red is now

the size of New Jersey. These nutrient levels are so high, that it triggers an explosive growth of algae; when the algae dies, the decomposition process consumes all the oxygen, so all marine life dies—no crabs, no shrimp, no nothing.

So, again, the water we saw running off these fields goes into the Mississippi, and this is what happens to it.

What can be done about it? There are things that can be done about it. This picture show us one. I showed you a picture a little bit ago of the water running off the field. That wouldn't happen here. This is the Boone River watershed, Hamilton County, IA. We see buffer strips along the streams. So if there is a heavy rain, any runoff will be trapped by the trees and the grasslands and whatever else is in between.

Those nutrients are good for trees. It makes them grow. The trees keep the nutrients from going in the water. Practices such as this are promoted by several conservation programs—the Conservation Stewardship Program, the EQIP program, the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, and the Conservation Reserve Program, especially the continuous signup.

What is so important to note is that these are incentives paid to farmers to do these strips. One might say: Why wouldn't farmers just do that on their own? Why? Because of economics. The Senator was present today when I mentioned earlier about my backyard. I happen to be one of a few people who actually lives in the house in which he was born. Not many people can say that. I actually live in the house in which I was born.

A lot of people say: HARKIN, I live in the house I grew up in.

I said: That is not what I said. I live in the house in which I was born. I wasn't born in a hospital. I was born in a house, as were all my five siblings. We lived in a small town in rural Iowa. People were born at home.

In my home, we have a nice backyard with fruit trees. My wife planted a nice garden out there. Ever since I was a kid, I always thought I knew where the end of our garden was to the east, and there has always been a field there, about a 140-acre field with corn and beans.

Because of the high price of corn and the high price of beans, the owner of that property sent a notice to all of us who live around it saying: I just had my property resurveyed, and my property is about 6 feet more into your property than what you think.

He has his rights. No one ever bothered to think about it in the past. We had our garden there, and we had our trees. As a consequence, I am going to have to have some of our bushes and trees taken out and move the line back. I guess I mind a little bit, but the guy is within his rights.

One might think: What does 6 feet mean? Up until now, 6 feet never meant a hoot to any farmer who farmed that land, and it has gone through three or

four different hands. No one ever cared about it. Because the demands are now so high on the owner of that property, and I am sure the farmer who farms that land says: You know, that extra 6 feet, I can grow a few more rows of corn in there and get some more money. So before next year we have to move everything back, and they get another 6 feet.

I tell that story to demonstrate the pressures that farmers are under to plow and plant right up to the fence row or anyplace they can get.

I don't know the farmer who owns that land in this photograph, but I can tell you his economic pressures are to plant right up to the stream, to get rid of all that buffer and plant right up to the stream. Why doesn't he? Because he is in a conservation program that is giving him incentives, payments to provide a continuous strip through there. He might have made a little more money if he had planted right up to it, but he has probably a CRP agreement for 10 years, maybe has a CSP contract.

I know a lot of farmers in Iowa who have done buffers like this. You know what, Mr. President. They feel better about it. They feel better about it because they know they are helping keep the water clean. They are farming the way nature really meant for them to farm. But because of economic pressures, they need help.

That is what this farm bill does, it provides some help and support. They get a benefit, but I can tell you, he probably would make more money if he plowed right up to the stream. But he is willing to give up a little bit as long as he gets some help from the Government to put this buffer in. They feel better about it.

What do we get out of it? Cleaner water, fish, not hypoxia down in the Gulf of Mexico. It cleans up our waterways. It preserves our soil for future generations. That is what is in this farm bill, to help them continue to do that.

I talked about the Midwest. How about the East? Here is a farm in Pennsylvania that uses many of our conservation practices. We see strip cropping and contour farming. They have some corn, maybe some alfalfa in there for livestock. It is good conservation practice. It looks as if he has a good rotation practices on this land.

There is one other item in this photograph. We see the city out here. It is encroaching on his farmland. There is a program called the Farmland Protection Program which buys easements on land, permanent easements on land. So that land cannot be converted to development; it has to stay as farmland. Again, here is a farmer. He could be getting CSP, the Conservation Stewardship Program. He may have gotten some EQIP money, and he may be getting farmland protection program money. I don't know. But those are all programs involved in preserving the land. We can see the strip cropping on

the hillside and the contour plowing. That is what he has done to hold back the water. Again, part of our farm bill is to provide money for the Farmland Protection Program.

Here is something a little bit closer to where we are here in the Capitol. Any of us who have been around this area for any time knows the Chesapeake Bay is polluted. Now, not all of that Chesapeake Bay pollution is because of farmland. There is a lot of industrial waste coming from factories and from other places up and down—plants, people dumping stuff out and going into the Chesapeake Bay. That has to be stopped. But a big part of the Chesapeake Bay problem is the nutrients coming off a lot of our land, such as livestock waste. It comes from the whole Chesapeake Bay watershed, which extends all the way to New York State. So New York State, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, a little bit of West Virginia, all that water dumps into the Chesapeake Bay, eventually.

Here is a farm in New Castle County, DE. Again, this is a prime example of conservation of the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Prior to this picture being taken—you can see some wetlands and farm fields in the background—where that wetland is, crops used to grow. So from those fields, nutrients ran off right into the bay. Through conservation programs and through the Wetlands Reserve Program, this farmer has gone back and, with the help of conservation, has put this back into a wetlands, secluded off from the Chesapeake Bay, so any runoff filters through the wetlands. It filters through the wetlands before it gets to the Chesapeake Bay.

If anybody wants to see how a wetlands works, you don't have to go more than about 15 miles from where this Capitol is, southwest of here. There is something called the Huntley Meadows Wetlands Reserve. I recommend it highly for anyone. Go down there and take a stroll through the wetlands. They have done a great job. They have preserved the wetlands, and it is right in the middle of a city. All of a sudden you go from housing developments and busy thoroughfares up Route 1 and down south, and all of a sudden you are in a wetlands area. A lot of the runoff from apartment houses and businesses and parking lots and everything else drains into this wetlands. By the time it gets through and dumps into the Potomac River, it is clean. The wetlands cleans it up. It is 15 miles from here where you can see it happen, Huntley Meadows.

This bill provides \$160 million for the Chesapeake Bay to do this kind of work to back up into the farmlands, restore wetlands, and help farmers build the structures and do the things to clean up the Chesapeake Bay. We can do it. This farmer did it in Delaware.

Now, this photo is from Georgia. Well, you can't see much except this shows pine trees back here. All pine

trees back here, but in the past they were overgrown and so thick that wildlife could not use it for habitat. So they thinned it out to provided for some wildlife cover in that area. One of Senator CHAMBLISS's priorities was to add a feature to the Conservation Reserve Program that will result in better management of soft wood pine stands currently enrolled in the CRP. The Senate bill invests \$84 million in this effort. Again, showing the breadth and the depth of what we are doing on conservation in forested areas in the South, making sure we have good conservation at work there also.

And lest we forget about the West, this is Arizona. This is well-managed grazing land. The Conservation Stewardship Program provides incentives to increase current conservation, use better management practices, such as rotational grazing that better utilizes the resource base and increases wildlife habitat. The Senate bill continues to devote 60 percent of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program to livestock needs.

Again, it is hard to see here, but what we are trying to show with this is that with fences, with rotational grazing, you don't feed down all the grass and don't create areas where the wind blows all the dust, or if they have a heavy rain it runs the soil off. This is good conservation practice and rotational grazing. You graze for a while, then you move them on. But in order to do that, you obviously need some fences, and fences cost money. So we provide that kind of help. If a rancher wants to get involved in good conservation practices with rotational grazing, we help with that. We help with that. So even in the Arizona southwest, we can make a difference.

Well, now you might wonder about this picture. Well, we are all familiar with the problems affecting honeybees and other pollinating species. In this farm bill, we have made strategic changes to help with this issue. In the Conservation Reserve Program, the Conservation Stewardship Program, and the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, we emphasize the creation and improvement of both the native and managed pollinator habitat. We require the Secretary of Agriculture to update conservation standards to include consideration for pollinators. Now, our Senate bill provides clear direction to focus conservation programs on creating, improving, and maintaining pollinator habitats and to revise and update conservation practices to include pollinators.

Again, together these practices will help to establish better pollination. We know we have had a problem with honeybees dying. We don't know exactly what is causing it. They are doing a lot of research on it now. But we do know one thing. In order for our prairies once again to blossom and do all the kinds of conservation work we need, we need that little animal called a honeybee for pollination purposes. So this bill invests in that also.

Coming full circle, when I started off my talk, I showed pictures of the great Dust Bowl in Kansas and places such as that—eastern Colorado. That is where this picture was taken. If you could take a picture of here in 1935, you would see the Dust Bowl. What has happened in this area, obviously a housing development has grown up, but in the foreground you will see grassland. That is a grassland reserve. They can't build houses there. You see a part of it, but this is a huge grassland reserve—protected by an easement that ensures that it stays in agricultural production. Grass will grow there, and livestock will graze, and the grass will hold the soil down, and keep the dust from blowing.

So, again, in this Grassland Reserve Program, there are about a million acres enrolled right now, but we haven't been doing it very long. Remember, I mentioned in the Dust Bowl that 80 million acres—80 million acres—were turned up. We have a million in protected grassland. We have a long way to go. We have a long way to go. But we put in \$240 million for the Grassland Reserve Program in this bill to continue the program.

Now, again, I want to digress a little bit on this grassland. You see, one of the other things we are doing in our farm bill is we are providing money for ethanol—cellulosic ethanol. Ethanol not made from row crops, such as corn, but cellulose made from grass, such as this. With the research we are doing, we know we can make ethanol from these grasses. We are getting the right enzymes to make it economical. The scientists and engineers tell me that in 5 years or so we will have an economical means of making cellulosic ethanol. We are already investing in that in several ethanol plants around the country.

Imagine, if you will, this huge area of grasslands in the Plains States, where I showed the picture of the Dust Bowl.

This is the picture I showed earlier of a dust storm in Kansas last year. Now imagine, if you will, that rather than cropping this land, as we do every year, we have grassland. Now, as Timothy Egan pointed out in his book, nature has a way of selecting the best ecosystem over a long period of time. Nature does that, whether it is the rain forest up in the Northwest, the bay area here for shellfish and others, and backwaters, where all the fish life starts, or in the grasslands in the Plains areas. So over thousands and thousands and thousands of years, nature laid down this thin topsoil, and on top of it grew grasses—buffalo grass, blue stem, others—and through selectivity, over periods of time, were the hardest to grow there. They sent their roots down 20, 30 feet into the ground, and they could withstand years of drought, the worst blizzards, and grass fires that used to sweep across the Plains.

Anyone who has ever read the Laura Ingalls Wilder book "Little House on

the Prairie" knows how she talks about the threat of these huge fires sweeping through and all of that kept coming back, the grasslands that were there. Millions of buffalo ranged up and down there and had enough food to sustain them forever, and in 20 years we turned over 80 million acres of it that then dried up and blew away.

But think about this. We are going to have cellulose ethanol made from grass. Ten years from now, fifteen years from now, twenty years from now, we could see much of this land back into grassland. Not for buffalo to graze on but being grown as cellulosic feedstock being cut for ethanol and making fuel for our country. You don't have to plow it up. You leave it there, you cut it, it stays there and grows the next year. We can have the best conservation, we can have our grasslands, and we can produce the fuel we need for this country and do it in a way that is in concert with nature.

So that is why it is so important we get this grassland back and provide the incentives to protect as much of this grass as possible, and that is why we put \$240 million into this bill.

The last couple of things I want to show is the Conservation Security Program, now renamed the Conservation Stewardship Program, which has enrolled about 15 million acres since 2002. This was a new program put into the farm bill in 2002. You see, most conservation programs are programs designed to give incentives to someone to take land out of production, put it into grassland, put it in trees, wetlands and buffer strips. And that is an important part of conservation.

But there is a lot of working lands. We need farmers to be better conservationists on working lands, lands that are being cropped. That means, for example, putting on the right amount of fertilizer and other management practices that can make a big difference for the environment.

Through the Conservation Security Program, I saw areas where farmers enrolled, and transitioned to precision agriculture, with equipment guided by the Global Positioning System. They had soil tests done of their farm, and rather than applying the same amount of fertilizer all over, they put the right amount of fertilizer wherever they applied it—more one place, less in another place. They were able to monitor and get the right amount of fertilizer so it wouldn't run off. They were able to buy equipment so they could do minimum tillage, where they didn't have to turn the soil over with the plow. They could combine, cut the cornstalks and leave it right there on the ground.

I visited a farm in southern Iowa this summer that was in the Conservation Security Program. With help the farmer received from the program, he had purchased some equipment to do what I am talking about. Then he took me over his land. He had corn last year. This year, he is planting beans. So he

is on a rotation, which is good for the soil. But he left all his cornstalks chopped and laid on the ground. At the time of my visit, there was rain in his area. It rained almost 5 inches—5 inches in about 12 hours. Now that is a heavy rain. We drove all over his land in a four-wheel drive vehicle. He hardly had any soil runoff because that rain would hit those cornstalks on the ground, slide off—he almost had literally no soil runoff.

Right across the road was a farmer who was not in the program and was planting corn up and down the hillsides and there were ditches where the water had taken that soil and run off the farm into other ditches, into streams, and the soil was gone.

The program in the 2002 farm bill was a conservation program to help farmers be better conservationists on land on which they were actually producing crops or livestock. They didn't have to take land out of production. They just had to do things better: minimum tillage, crop rotations, buffer strips, applying with the right amount of fertilizer—that type of thing. For producers who have been able to enroll, it has worked wonderfully.

But there has been one problem. The administration decided to allow enrollment on the basis of a watershed rotation. Over eight years, the program would supposedly cover all the watersheds in the country, but it has fallen far short of that goal. That is the bad news.

The good news is in this farm bill we get off the watershed rotation, and make CSP a national program—producers in every watershed and region of the states would be eligible to enroll, every year. Producers are ranked based upon the level of conservation they are already doing, and how much new conservation they are willing to do as part of the contract. We are strengthening this program.

It is hard to see on this chart, but the conservation security program is in every State in the Nation. It is all over, from Washington, Oregon, California, all across the east coast. A lot of people have said it is mostly for the Midwest. That is not true. On the east coast, on the far west up in Idaho. We even have some in Alaska, even some in Hawaii—again, to protect our soil and other resources.

The point I want to make here is in the last 5 years since we put this program in, we have enrolled 15 million acres. I know that sounds like a lot, but under the new program we have in this bill, with the funding we have, we will enroll 13.2 million acres each year in this program—13.2 million acres every year. We had 15 million acres in 5 years. We will do almost as much every year for the next 5 years. This means by the end of this farm bill we will have about 80 million acres enrolled in this program.

What will that mean? It will mean cleaner water, better wildlife habitats, less soil runoff; a better environment, a

healthier environment for farmers, their families, and for all of us. That is why this program is so important.

It is sad to say, the House didn't put anything into this program and actually cut the program from baseline. It is an important program, one that can do a lot of good for our country. But it needs to be funded properly to give producers a fair shot at enrolling for it to do the good it has the potential of doing.

Last, here is the kind of thing we are looking at here. We talked about the soil and the land but it all comes down to people and the kind of people we have farming, and their families. That is what it comes down to. How do we nurture beginning farmers? How do we get young people involved in this?

Here is a young dairy farmer, Matt Fendry. He is 25 years old. He farms near Lanesboro in southeast Minnesota. He is a beginning farmer. He sells his milk through Organic Valley out of Lafarge, WI.

Matt, like many beginning farmers and ranchers, will benefit from the provisions we have in the conservation title. Here is how we do it.

For beginning farmers like Matt Fendry, and socially disadvantaged producers, we have included a special increase in cost-share rates up to 90 percent. So if the young man here wants to do good conservation work on his land—maybe rotational grazing the grassland for his cattle—it probably will cost him a little bit to get some things established. He can get back 90 percent. He only has to put up 10 percent of this money. The Government will come in for 90 percent for a beginning farmer.

Ten percent of our conservation programs will be reserved for beginning farmers. And for the first time we will allow the Secretary of Agriculture to advance up to 30 percent of the value of an EQIP contract to beginning and socially disadvantaged producers so they can purchase the materials they need for conservation work.

Most of the EQIP money that will go to Matt for what he will do for good conservation would come after he does it, maybe a year after. That means he would have to borrow the money, and pay interest. Now we give the Secretary authority to get what he needs, 30 percent up front, so if he needs to put in fencing, buy seed, whatever he needs to get this operation going using good conservation, he can get up front.

I think that is probably the bottom line here on my whole talk this evening, and that is what can we do for conservation. But what can we do to get young people involved in a way so they start from the very beginning, not just being a producer but being an environmentally conscious producer and one who, from the very beginning, protects our soil, our water, and our wildlife habitat? That is the goal of this.

You can see I am very passionate about this. I am passionate because if you read history, you know what we

are doing. We saw it in the photos at the beginning of my presentation—we are repeating the mistakes of the past. We are abusing the land and pushing it beyond its productive capacity. As I said—the farmers want to protect their soil and their land. But the economics of agriculture drives producers to produce as much as they can when prices are high. The farm bill has to counter those pressures.

It is not good for this country. It is not good for our society. It is not good for rural America. So we need to make some changes in this farm bill and redirect it and guide it toward more conservation.

Back in 1998, I was wondering why it was that Europe was spending so much of government money on their farmers, yet they were complying with the World Trade Organization restrictions on farm subsidies. We are spending less money on our farmers and somehow we are not complying. I wanted to see what were they doing in Europe different than we were doing. So I traveled around and visited a lot of their farms.

No matter where I went, I saw a pristine countryside. I saw a countryside with small towns that were vibrant. I saw soil that was protected, waterways that were decently clean—some areas better than others. Finally I began to figure it out, what countries like France, Belgium, Germany, Spain, England, and Denmark were doing. They were making “green payments” to farmers, payments to farmers for conservation. Under the WTO, that is in the “green box,” which means it doesn't count against WTO limits. So some of the Europeans figure out here is the way we support our farmers, our small towns, our communities, clean up our water, provide for a beautiful countryside, and, guess what, we don't take a hit in the WTO because of that.

That made me think. I come back, traveling around through this country, I see the wind blowing, I see the dust storms, the soil erosion, the hypoxia maps in the Gulf of Mexico, what is happening to the Chesapeake Bay, and I think: Wait a minute, why aren't we doing that?

We have a program now, a direct payment program—\$5 billion a year, \$25 billion over the life of this farm bill, that started in 1996, of direct payments to farmers. To qualify for direct payments, all you had to do is have base acreage and a certain crop back in 1981 to 1985. You don't have to plant anything to get this money.

Moreover, the bigger you are, and the bigger the base you had, the more money you get. The result is that these payments lead to a cycle. More direct payments means a greater opportunity to expand. More expansion means more direct payments. It is like a black hole, there is nothing to stop it.

I am concerned that this cycle is hurting family farmers. It encourages producers to get bigger and bigger. Yet here we go, \$5 billion a year, \$25 billion

over the life of this. It seems to me it would make much more sense and would be more supported, I think, by the general populace, if we took that money and put it out in green payments to farmers to build the buffer strips, the contours, the wetlands, the grasslands—yes, paying farmers to help them use the right amount of fertilizer and do rotations and things such as that, that help preserve the soil.

Conservation programs are perfectly acceptable under WTO. We get a lot out of it. I am hopeful in the coming weeks, maybe as we go to conference on this farm bill, we can do more for conservation.

I want to say we did a good job on conservation in this bill. I am not denying that. We put good money in conservation. I thank my ranking member, SAXBY CHAMBLISS, and all the others on the committee. It was a hard fight but we got the money in there. But it is not quite enough when you look at all the other things in the farm bill. We moved the ball forward, but I think with the demands on our farmers now, what we see happening around this country, we need an even greater commitment. We need to do a lot more in conservation than we have ever done before or pretty soon the scales will tip so far that the kind of money it is going to take it to do it will be prohibitive.

That is why I take the time of the Senate tonight to talk about conservation. We need a better conservation ethic in this country. As we consider the farm bill, we need to be talking about soil and water conservation, helping farmers be better stewards of the soil and water. I am hopeful as we move into more debate we can make a few changes that will add some money to conservation before we go to conference. We have done a lot in the farm bill, but we have a lot more we can do.

So I ask any Senator out there who has an amendment, if you have not filed it, you better file it because pretty soon we may cut it off.

I am not encouraging amendments, you understand. I am just saying, if you have one, you better get it in in a hurry, and we will take a look at it.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

Mr. HARKIN. 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. HARKIN. Mr. President, on behalf of Senator REID, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 206, the nomination of James Kunder to be Deputy Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development; that the nomination be confirmed; the motion to reconsider be laid on the table; the President be im-

mediately notified of the Senate's action; and the Senate then return to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Reserving the right to object, I understand that Senator COBURN, who was on the Senate floor a little earlier, has an objection to this request. On his behalf I would object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, I would like to say to all of our colleagues, we have worked diligently to try to come together with a list of amendments on the farm bill to try to make sure that we proceed in some sort of regular order over the next several days.

Unfortunately, we have been here all day without being able to consider amendments. It is the unfortunate part of the way we do business in this body, trying to be deliberate, trying to make sure we are fair, not operating under a rule like our colleagues in the House do.

It is the way the Senate is designed to work. I think now it appears our leaders are going to be able to sit down with a list of amendments that have come forward from the majority side of the aisle, a list of amendments that have come forward from the minority side of the aisle, and we are going to be able to agree that these are all of the amendments that can be considered.

There is no agreement that all of them are germane, but there is hopefully going to be an agreement shortly that will allow us to proceed in the regular order for the consideration of amendments. It is a frustrating process that we go through from time to time.

When we were in the majority and our colleagues on the other side of the aisle were in the minority, again, there was many a day that we sat wanting to move forward and not being able to because of the way the process in the Senate works.

I would simply say to our colleagues that I fully expect that we are going to have an agreement, which means we should be able to move forward with the farm bill tomorrow, from an amendment consideration standpoint. Senator HARKIN and I pretty well agreed on the order of a couple of amendments that we will begin with that are critical amendments for consideration.

I am very hopeful that within the next couple of days not only will we make significant progress on the farm bill, but I am very hopeful, as I know Senator HARKIN, Senator CONRAD, and all of us are who have been working very hard together in a bipartisan way to get this bill before our colleagues, to have it considered before we get away from here for Thanksgiving so we can complete it early on in December and, hopefully, get it to the desk of the President in time that farmers and ranchers across this country will know

what the farm policy is going to be for the next 5 years versus having to enter into the end-of-the-year process with a big question mark out there.

I simply say, again, we hope that is going to happen. I hope before we leave here in the next several minutes, whatever it may be, that we do have some agreement on the direction in which we are moving with respect to amendments to be offered to the farm bill.

I yield the floor, and 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. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BROWN.) Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, we are still, as I understand, on the 2007 farm bill. I wanted to speak to one particular title of that bill, if I might, today.

As I have noted before, I support the Food Security and Energy Security Act of 2007, which is currently before the Senate. My hope is that in the not too distant future, we will be able to reach an agreement with regard to amendments so that we can move this process forward.

My fear is, if we do not reach any resolution this week and this gets pushed back until after the Thanksgiving break, that we run a very serious risk that we are not going to be able to get a bill through the Senate, conferred with the House, before the end of the year.

In my judgment it is incredibly important to farmers and ranchers across this country that we come to some conclusions with this farm bill to give them some certainty, as they approach the 2008 planting season, about what the rules are going to be, what the programs are going to be, how it has perhaps changed from what we currently have in place.

But, in any event, it is, from a timing standpoint, of great importance that we act as soon as we can on the 2007 farm bill. So my hope would be, again, that we reach some resolution between the leadership on both sides as it pertains to amendments, and, of course, I have an amendment dealing with renewable fuel standards that I hope will be able to be included in that list of amendments that we get to debate and ultimately vote on.

But I do want to speak this evening with regard to one particular aspect of this farm bill, and it is an important one. It is one that perhaps has not been emphasized as much in this debate, although the Senator from Iowa, I heard earlier this evening, speaking to the conservation title of the farm bill. But my colleagues and I have spent the better part of the last 2 years listening to our constituents and translating those concerns and suggestions into the farm

bill that we have before the Senate today. We have also listened to multiple criticisms, mostly coming from those who are not directly involved in agriculture, telling us what is wrong with this farm bill.

But today I would like to talk about the conservation title because I believe it is just as critical to production agriculture in many respects as the commodity title.

The conservation title of the farm bill comprises only about 9 percent of its total cost. Yet it potentially affects more than 350 million acres of land in the United States.

When I say 9 percent, if you look at total spending in the 2007 farm bill, about 14 percent of the money in the bill is in the commodity title. Those are the programs that support production agriculture. About 9 percent is in this conservation title to which I address my remarks. The balance—about 67 percent or about two-thirds—of the funding in the farm bill actually goes toward nutrition, those aspects of the farm bill that really are very much unrelated to production agriculture. That is where the predominant share of the money is spent. A lot of times when those who criticize farm bills attack the funding that goes toward production agriculture, it is important to realize that most of the money in this bill isn't going to production agriculture. It is not going to the commodity title. It is going, two-thirds of it, to the nutrition title. That is in contrast to the last farm bill, the farm bill we operate under today, where about 28 percent of the funding in the bill goes to the commodity title, production agriculture, and about 54 percent of the funding, under the 2002 farm bill which is currently in effect and which we are hopefully reauthorizing with the 2007 version, goes toward nutrition. Under the new farm bill, the one before us today, about 67 percent of the money would go toward the nutrition title of the bill. I don't think it is fair in many respects when those who would like to criticize this attack it for the money going to the commodity title. That is certainly not the case.

The 9 percent that goes into conservation is important. There probably isn't anything that we do in terms of conservation or environmental stewardship that actually does more to achieve the objectives we all want than this conservation title in the farm bill achieves.

This picture, taken in 2007, is an example of the role played by the farm bill conservation title. What you see in the picture is CRP on the farm. You see also an example of crop production, working literally hand in hand. If you look in the bottom part of the picture, you see Conservation Reserve Program, the land that has been put into native grasses that is in abundance. You see in the center of the photograph a wetland area, some water in the background. Across the way, you see the cornfields that have been planted. The

balance that has been struck on this property is seen between conservation, between native grasses, a wetland area that has been managed, and it all being complemented with a corn crop as well. That sort of describes what all of us would like to see when it comes to the way we manage our lands and the way farmers go about incorporating conservation practices into their crop production as well.

The CRP on this farm, the 1.5 million acres enrolled in CRP in South Dakota added 10 million pheasants and \$153 million to South Dakota's economy. This year's record corn crop in South Dakota at 556 million bushels is worth an additional \$1.8 billion to South Dakota farmers—again, those two working hand in hand in South Dakota achieving record corn crops at the same time that we have a record pheasant crop because of the good conservation practices that have been employed by many of the farmers in our State and which have been in response to, their practices, many of the incentives that were put in place in previous farm bills.

The second picture we have this evening is a picture taken not too long ago in South Dakota, a few months back, in the year 2007, and it tells another story. A lot of people would look at this picture and say: That must be the Great Depression, because when you look at it, that certainly is what it would appear to be. But it is not a scene from the 1930s; it is a scene from last March in 2007. It is an example and a result of what happened when native sod was cropped, because crop insurance provided an unintended incentive to convert marginal pastureland or native sod into cropland. This picture sends a stronger message than any words could about the inherent need to take care of our land. The topsoil you see in the fence line and ditch along this South Dakota field took literally millions of years to create and one dust storm to remove. The damage you see here cannot be undone.

There is a sod saver provision in the farm bill we are considering. It won't prohibit anyone from converting native sod into cropland, but what it does do, what the sod saver provision in this bill does is eliminate the incentives found in current Federal farm policy that encourage unwise farming practices which result in the consequences shown here.

Again, it is not a scene from the 1930s, which at first glance one might expect, but it is a scene literally from last March, calendar year 2007, in South Dakota. It is an example of what can happen when bad practices are undertaken.

The next picture is an example of some of the native sod that is being converted to cropland in South Dakota. For the past 100 years, billions of acres of prairie have been converted to productive farmland. Most native sod that can be productively farmed in South Dakota and other prairie States

has already been converted to cropland. We faced a shortage of money to write this farm bill. I don't believe it is a wise use of Federal funds to pay for crop insurance and disaster programs on this type of land. If the farmer who owns this land wants to farm it under this farm bill, he or she is free to do so. But let's not subsidize it. That is an example of land that should not be brought under the plow, and this farm bill prevents crop insurance or disaster program payments from going to a farmer who would convert native prairie ground such as this into cropland.

This is an example of a dust storm that was not limited to the 1930s. This picture was taken in 2005 in South Dakota. Once again, we see the consequences of unwise land stewardship practices disturbingly evident in this picture.

During the 1930s, South Dakota received billions of tons of Kansas and Oklahoma topsoil, much of it still in place in fence lines and fields. The programs we drafted in the conservation title of this farm bill, if funded adequately, will ensure that Kansas and Oklahoma farmers no longer see their topsoil blow to South Dakota and that South Dakota farmers will keep their topsoil in their fields and not in the ditches and fence lines as we saw in the previous picture.

I have stated many times before and I will emphasize once more that production agriculture and conservation should not compete; rather, they should complement each other.

This is another picture of a South Dakota cornfield in CRP. CRP is native grasses in the foreground and then, of course, a cornfield planted toward the background of the picture. Every agricultural area in the country is blessed with productive land and also land that needs help to keep from polluting the water we drink and the air we breathe.

I ask those who are so critical of this farm bill to take a close look at the conservation title and what it offers. In spite of the budget cuts made in drafting this farm bill, which made it more difficult than writing any other farm bill that has ever been written, I am pleased that my colleagues and I have been able to write a farm bill with a sound conservation title.

I will point out once more examples of the benefits of the conservation title in this farm bill: First, protecting and enhancing our soil and our land; secondly, providing an economic alternative to placing costly fertilizer, seed, and chemicals on unproductive cropland; third, enhancing recreation and boosting local economies, which, as I noted earlier, created in our State of South Dakota an abundance of pheasants, 10 million pheasants this year, which is the highest number of pheasants we have seen at any time since the 1960s—they say about 1962 was the last time we had this kind of pheasant numbers in South Dakota—and \$153 million to the economy of my State as a result of the recreation value that

comes from good, sound conservation practices.

I believe it is very important to take a breather from the controversy surrounding this farm bill and to take a few minutes to focus on the farm bill's proven capabilities to enhance rural America and to improve our Nation's water and soil. The conservation title will do just that. This is one of many reasons this farm bill deserves the support of our colleagues.

I leave my colleagues with the following information regarding the conservation title in the 2002 farm bill. Nationwide, without a conservation title, we would have 13.5 million fewer pheasants, 450 million tons of topsoil disappearing every single year, 2.2 million fewer ducks, an additional 170,000 miles of unprotected streams, and 40 million fewer acres of wildlife habitat. That is the value of a conservation title in the farm bill which accomplishes multiple objectives—protecting and enhancing our soil and land, providing an economic alternative to placing costly fertilizer, seed, and chemicals on unproductive cropland, and enhancing recreation and boosting local economies. Nine percent of the funding in this farm bill goes toward that end. That, when put in a total perspective of what this farm bill spends, is not that much relative to the benefit we accomplish and to the bad things we avoid happening by having a good conservation title.

As this farm bill is debated, we will have amendments at some point when we get an agreement. The amendments will focus on a lot of other areas of the farm bill. Some will focus on the commodity title and trying to move money around within the farm bill.

I am interested in the energy title. I have an amendment to the energy title, and we worked very hard in crafting the energy title in this farm bill to provide the necessary economic incentives for further investment in cellulosic ethanol production. The renewable fuels standard amendment I hope to be able to offer along with Senators DOMENICI AND NELSON of Nebraska and others on a bipartisan basis will make that energy title stronger. It will improve it.

It will give us some headroom to work within the area of renewable energy. The renewable fuels standard put in place back in 2005 called for 7.5 billion gallons of renewable fuel by the year 2012. We are going to hit 7.5 billion gallons by the end of this year if we don't act to increase the renewable fuels standard. We have a terrible crunch that is coming ahead of us. I hope we can get this amendment adopted that raises the renewable fuels standard, moves it to 8.5 billion gallons in the year 2008. It will give us the necessary headroom to keep this wonderful example of renewable energy in this country and a remarkable story going forward.

If we don't do something to address the renewable fuels standard, my fear

is we will run into a wall. That would not be good. It would not be good for those who have already invested in ethanol facilities. It would not be good, clearly, for the economy in rural areas and all the jobs that have been created as a result of renewable energy. As importantly, if not more importantly, it will do nothing to lessen our dependence upon foreign sources of energy, which at the end of the day is so important in terms of our policy objectives.

This farm bill, by encouraging more energy production, if we can get the renewable fuels standard added to it, will take us a long way toward lessening our dependence on foreign energy. I would hope before this debate is concluded we will be able to have the amendments adopted and voted on, if not adopted, but certainly a chance to debate these things which we think will make the farm bill stronger. Some of those amendments may deal with the conservation title, but I think this particular title is one that often gets overlooked in the discussion that is held about the farm bill because of the focus on production agriculture and because of the focus on the nutrition title of the bill which really comprises about two-thirds of the total funding of the bill.

But 9 percent of the money that is spent in this farm bill, the conservation value we get from that and the difference it is making in areas all across this country in protecting our critical soil and water resources, in adding to our economy, providing recreational opportunities such as pheasant hunting in South Dakota—this is a very important title of this bill, one that there was great deliberation and consideration given toward coming up with.

I hope at the end of the day we will get the farm bill passed before the end of the year and get this conservation title, along with the other policy changes that are included in the farm bill, implemented into law so our farmers and our ranchers and those who will benefit from the great recreational opportunities that will result from this conservation title will know what the rules are going to be as we approach this next year.

So, again, I have heard many of my colleagues come down and speak on the floor today about different aspects of this bill. My biggest hope and greatest fear at this point is—my biggest hope is we get this thing moving this week. My greatest fear is if we do not, we are not going to get a farm bill this year. So I hope before we leave this week we will come to a resolution about amendments and the way forward and the process we are going to use to get a farm bill adopted.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

VETERANS DAY

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, 53 years ago, President Dwight Eisenhower named November 11 "Veterans Day," setting aside that day to honor all

Americans who have served our country so honorably in the military, both in war and in peace.

I want to take the opportunity this day of remembrance provides to say to all veterans and their families, thank you for your courage, your character, your strength, and the enduring power of your example. All Americans owe you our gratitude and appreciation for your commitment to and sacrifice for our Nation.

Since our Nation's struggle for freedom more than two centuries ago, nearly 50 million men and women have served in the U.S. military and nearly 25 million of these veterans are alive today. Our thoughts and prayers also are with our veterans of tomorrow—the 1.4 million Americans serving in our Armed Forces, including the more than 189,000 service men and women who are in harm's way in Iraq and Afghanistan. Because of the noble service and tremendous sacrifices of our men and women in uniform, the United States stands as a beacon of democracy, hope, and opportunity to the rest of the world.

At this moment, as we send soldiers to fight overseas, our support for our servicemembers must remain steadfast and strong. Our veterans have earned access to quality health care, affordable educational opportunities, and a chance to thrive once home.

I am proud today to be a part of this Congress that has worked to honor our commitment to our Nation's veterans. In September, the Senate passed the Veterans Affairs Appropriations bill for 2008. The legislation provides nearly 65 billion dollars for the Veterans' Administration. Specifically, the bill makes substantial new investments to improve and strengthen health care for our brave veterans, making critical investments in medical services, including treatment of traumatic brain injury, TBI, and post-traumatic stress disorder, PTSD, for Iraq and Afghanistan veterans; funding for new claims processors to address the backlog of pending disability claims, and the investment in VA repair and maintenance necessary to prevent another Walter Reed type situation. These investments address key shortcomings in our veterans health care system.

Although a minority in the Senate blocked our ability to send that legislation to the President's desk last week, we voted this past Thursday to provide temporary funding at the level the Bush administration requested. That amount is \$4 billion less than what we in Congress originally intended. We remain committed to ensuring the VA receives the full \$65 billion necessary to provide veterans the care and services they have earned.

But just as important as the quality of care is access to care. My colleague, Senator BARBARA A. MIKULSKI, and I have worked together to secure Federal funding for two new VA community-based clinics in Maryland—one at Andrews Air Force Base in Prince