

power. If we are looking for a renewable, clean, and stable source of energy, there is one. But instead of promoting nuclear energy, this bill is silent. Instead of giving Floridians relief from the costs associated with storing the waste at our facilities, we are faced with mounting bills.

Florida ratepayers have already paid \$1.2 billion to move waste to Yucca Mountain, but it currently remains stored in Florida. It is sitting at the powerplants. This money, intended to store nuclear waste in Nevada, is costing Floridians money every month in every electric bill. It is costing us the money that should have been spent on producing more energy, on finding ways of bringing down the costs.

Under the 1982 Nuclear Waste Policy Act, we were supposed to be sending this waste to Yucca Mountain starting in 1998. We have let politics prevent us from embracing the promise of nuclear power. If we are serious about promoting the production of clean energy, we had better do what we promised Florida ratepayers and others around the Nation, that we open the central repository in Nevada.

We have enough coal to meet our energy needs for 200 years, and very little in this bill addresses that fact. States such as Kentucky, Montana, and Wyoming are rich in resources and ready to bring those resources to meet our growing fuel demands. As a Senator from Florida, I would much rather be digging for coal in Montana or Kentucky than drilling for oil on the beaches of Florida.

The Bingaman 15 percent RPS amendment is one of the amendments I encourage my colleagues to oppose. For Florida ratepayers who have embraced nuclear energy as a way to help reduce pollution, by 2030, the Bingaman amendment will have a cost of \$21 billion. I don't know how many people in Florida think their energy bills are too low, but I can't imagine that they are willing to start subsidizing wind farms in North Dakota. Florida property taxes are already sky high. Our property taxes, our insurance costs are even higher. The last thing Floridians want is a \$21 billion increase in their power bill. Break that down, and that is a rate increase of about \$2,500 per household. That is more than a year's tuition at the University of Florida. That is more than a family on a fixed income might spend in a year for any type of recreational activity. Florida doesn't have the resources or the capacity to meet the arbitrary definitions or demands of the Bingaman amendment. We will take a big financial hit if it passes.

In the next 10 years, Florida's energy demands are expected to grow 60 percent. We need reliable, affordable, abundant, clean-burning energy to meet our demands. Disincentives like the renewable portfolio standard amendment don't provide power to the State of Florida. They don't help Florida meet its needs for seniors, veterans,

working families, and those on fixed incomes.

This bill regulates and mandates, but where is the bill streamlining? Where is the redtape being reduced? Where are the incentives for States such as Florida to build upon those power sources which we have already found to be clean and successful?

A bright future for America and our economy depends on energy. We need it to run our homes, computers, cars, our entire way of life. Right now, we have a reliance on foreign sources of energy that is unhealthy. To get away from foreign sources of energy, we need to make the hard decisions today to give us a better tomorrow. That is certainly the case with our energy policy. Domestic solutions include nuclear, clean coal, biofuels, increased production of oil and natural gas. Obviously, conservation needs to be a cornerstone of what we do.

In Florida, we rejected oil and natural gas drilling off our coast in favor of pursuing alternatives, including expanding production in some of the deepest regions of the Outer Continental Shelf, opening 8.3 million acres for production. We are also studying new sources of energy. We are making great strides in biofuels research and development. We are working through public and private partnerships to harness the power of cellulosic ethanol and find ways to more efficiently turn orange rinds and sugar cane into energy. These are the ideas. These are the innovations we need to pursue in our natural energy policy. We need to reward States that are pursuing smart strategies. We need to stay away from penalizing those that don't have the resources to meet arbitrary and unrealistic benchmarks. We need an energy policy for the long haul.

I am hopeful we can do that, but we still have a lot more work to do.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Wyoming.

THE ECONOMY

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I listened to the conversation that has gone on this morning. I have to say I am a little bit disappointed in some of the negative comments about our country. I always thought you had to be an ultimate optimist to serve in this body. Things go slowly, which is probably fortunate, but we just can't keep trying to make ourselves look better by running down our country. I often remind people that I am not aware of anybody trying to get out of our country, but from the past 2 weeks' discussion, I know there are a lot of people trying to get in.

I will cite an article from the Wall Street Journal of Wednesday, May 23, 2007, that says, "The Poor Get Richer." It reads:

It's been a rough week for John Edwards, and now comes more bad news for his "two Americas" campaign theme. A new study by the Congressional Budget Office says the

poor have been getting less poor. On average, CBO found that low-wage households with children had incomes after inflation that were more than one-third higher in 2005 than in 1991.

I ask unanimous consent that the article be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the Wall Street Journal, May 23, 2007]

THE POOR GET RICHER

It's been a rough week for John Edwards, and now comes more bad news for his "two Americas" campaign theme. A new study by the Congressional Budget Office says the poor have been getting less poor. On average, CBO found that low-wage households with children had incomes after inflation that were more than one-third higher in 2005 than in 1991.

The CBO results don't fit the prevailing media stereotype of the U.S. economy as a richer take all affair—which may explain why you haven't read about them. Among all families with children, the poorest fifth had the fastest overall earnings growth over the 15 years measured. (See the nearby chart.) The poorest even had higher earnings growth than the richest 20%. The earnings of these poor households are about 80% higher today than in the early 1990s.

What happened? CBO says the main causes of this low-income earnings surge have been a combination of welfare reform, expansion of the earned income tax credit and wage gains from a tight labor market, especially in the late stages of the 1990s expansion. Though cash welfare fell as a share of overall income (which includes government benefits), earnings from work climbed sharply as the 1996 welfare reform pushed at least one family breadwinner into the job market.

Earnings growth tapered off as the economy slowed in the early part of this decade, but earnings for low-income families have still nearly doubled in the years since welfare reform became law. Some two million welfare mothers have left the dole for jobs since the mid-1990s. Far from being a disaster for the poor, as most on the left claimed when it was debated, welfare reform has proven to be a boon.

The report also rebuts the claim, fashionable in some precincts on CNN, that the middle class is losing ground. The median family with children saw an 18% rise in earnings from the early 1990s through 2005. That's \$8,500 more purchasing power after inflation. The wealthiest fifth made a 55% gain in earnings, but the key point is that every class saw significant gains in income.

There's a lot of income mobility in America, so comparing poor families today with the poor families of 10 years ago can be misleading because they're not the same families. Every year hundreds of thousands of new immigrants and the young enter the workforce at "poor" income levels. But the CBO study found that, with the exception of chronically poor families who have no breadwinner, low-income job holders are climbing the income ladder.

When CBO examined surveys of the same poor families over a two year period, 2001–2003, it found that "the average income for those households increased by nearly 45%." That's especially impressive considering that those were two of the weakest years for economic growth across the 15 years of the larger study.

One argument was whether welfare reform would help or hurt households headed by women. Well, CBO finds that female-headed poor households saw their incomes double from 1991 to 2005, and the percentage of that

income coming from a paycheck rose to more than a half from one-third. The percentage coming from traditional cash welfare fell to 7% from 42%. Poor households get more money from the earned income tax credit, but the advantage of that income-supplement program is that recipients have to work to get the benefit.

The poor took an earnings dip when the economy went into recession at the end of the Clinton era, but data from other government reports indicate that incomes are again starting to rise faster than inflation as labor markets tighten and the current economic expansion rolls forward.

It's probably asking way too much for this dose of economic reality to slow down the class envy lobby in Washington. But it's worth a try.

Mr. ENZI. Another article I refer to is from Denver's Rocky Mountain News for April 9, 2007, "Not bad for a much-maligned economy." We keep talking about how bad the economy is. Well, it isn't bad.

Just when your mind may have been grappling with the disturbing news that Circuit City stores had fired 3,400 of their highest-paid hourly salespeople—not to trim the workforce, as you might expect, but to replace those let go with lower-paid workers—along comes the Labor Department with equally startling news, but of a positive bent.

In March, the U.S. economy added 180,000 jobs; the unemployment rate declined again, to 4.4 percent; and average hourly and weekly earnings advanced, with weekly income up 4.4 percent . . .

The article goes on to read:

But after six years of fairly steady economic growth despite a costly war, Katrina, a housing slump and other body blows, fair-minded people should at least entertain the possibility that current policies must be getting something right.

It ends by saying:

After all, what exactly is it about the March economic figures that [you] don't like?

I ask unanimous consent that that article be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the Rocky Mountain News, Apr. 9, 2007]

NOT BAD FOR A MUCH-MALIGNED ECONOMY

Just when your mind may have been grappling with the disturbing news that Circuit City stores had fired 3,400 of their highest-paid hourly salespeople—not to trim the workforce, as you might expect, but to replace those let go with lower-paid workers—along comes the Labor Department with equally startling news, but of a positive bent.

In March, the U.S. economy added 180,000 jobs; the unemployment rate declined again, to 4.4 percent; and average hourly and weekly earnings advanced, with weekly income up 4.4 percent on an annual basis.

In other words, amid all of the economic anxiety fueled by globalization, immigration and the relentless rhetoric about a growing class divide in the United States, the actual performance of the American economy remains fairly remarkable.

We're not suggesting that the popular worries are baseless. Globalization involves winners and losers; immigration puts pressure on wages (at least on the lower end); and the rich have indeed been getting richer at a faster rate than the rest of us.

Even some of the popular resentments—such as over the steep trajectory of CEO pay—are hardly without merit.

But after six years of fairly steady economic growth despite a costly war, Katrina, a housing slump and other body blows, fair-minded people should at least entertain the possibility that current policies must be getting something right.

The burden of proof, indeed, should be on those who want to raise taxes, reverse advances in free trade, and micromanage businesses with a slew of new regulations affecting compensation, benefits and employment conditions.

After all, what exactly is it about the March economic figures that they don't like?

ENERGY

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, what I really came to address is an issue of utmost importance to the American people. When I visit my home State and read the mail I receive from constituents, I am consistently reminded of the fact that we are seeing record-high energy prices. High energy prices affect almost every American. They affect the parent who drives his or her kids to school. They affect the college student who wants to make it home for the weekend. They affect Members of the Senate as we travel to and from our States. But we have to be careful with what we do. A lot of the time, something that we think is going to be a positive move turns out to be a negative.

I refer to a Wall Street Journal article of May 16, 2007. It is titled "Green But Unclean." It reads:

Remember those water-saving toilets that Congress mandated a few years back? Yes, the ones that frequently clog and don't flush, causing many Americans to resort to buying high-performance, black-marketed potties in Canada and sneaking them into their homes like smugglers. Well, get set for Washington's latest brainstorm.

I ask unanimous consent to print this article in the RECORD.

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

[From the Wall Street Journal, May 16, 2007]

GREEN BUT UNCLEAN

Remember those water-saving toilets that Congress mandated a few years back? Yes, the ones that frequently clog and don't flush, causing many Americans to resort to buying high-performance black-market potties in Canada and sneaking them into their homes like smugglers. Well, get set for Washington's latest brainstorm: \$800 washers that don't really clean.

The June issue of Consumer Reports states that "Not so long ago you could count on most washers to get your clothes clean. Not anymore. . ." The magazine tested the new washers and found that "Some left our stain-soaked swatches nearly as dirty as they were before washing."

The cause of this dirty laundry is a regulation issued in the waning days of the Clinton Administration mandating that washers use 35% less energy by 2007. Regulators claimed at the time that this would save money and energy without sacrificing performance. That's what they always say. But, according to Consumer Reports, the new top-loading washers "had some of the lowest scores we've seen in years."

Don't expect apologies from Congress or the green activists who promoted these mandates. We are living in one of those eras where all Americans are supposed to bow before the gods of energy conservation, even if it means walking around with dirty underwear. One irony is that because the new machines clean so poorly, consumers will often have to rewash clothes, which could well offset energy savings from the mandates. Not to mention the use of extra detergent. But no matter: Crusades like these are about pure green intentions, not the impure actual results.

And this is just the beginning. President Bush's endorsement of more immediate auto-mileage standards this week is the latest sign that we are returning to the era when the environment is used as the political justification to promote a new wave of government regulation.

Members of Congress and state legislatures are proposing new government edicts forcing Americans to use new and more energy-efficient fluorescent light bulbs instead of the conventional incandescent bulbs that many people prefer. Apparently Americans aren't wise enough to make up their own minds, as technology adapts and prices of the new bulbs fall.

Once upon a time liberals said government should stay out of the bedroom; at the current rate, that will be the only room in the house where Uncle Sam won't be telling us how to live.

Mr. ENZI. Price increases are for a number of reasons, but the simplest explanation is that we lack the supply to meet the demand for energy. At the same time, prices decrease when we see strong supplies that are capable of meeting the demand that exists.

We have to be careful that we reduce the demand—and that is what part of this bill does—but we also have to figure out a way to increase the supply. I am a little disappointed in what the bill does with that.

On June 12, 2007, there was an article in the Casper Star-Tribune. The title is "Official warns of energy crisis; Growth in demand for electricity in West exceeds generation capacity." Of course, for years we have been hearing about rolling brownouts in California and even blackouts in part of the country.

It says:

Construction of new electrical generation in the West is projected to grow by 6 percent, while demand for electricity is projected to increase by 19 percent over the next 10 years, according to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

FERC Commissioner Suede Kelly, speaking on her own behalf, said the situation is nothing short of a crisis.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the article be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the Casper Star-Tribune, June 12, 2007]

OFFICIAL WARNS OF ENERGY CRISIS
(By Dustin Bleizeffer)

DEADWOOD, S.D.—Construction of new electrical generation in the West is projected to grow by 6 percent, while demand for electricity is projected to increase by 19 percent over the next 10 years, according to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.