is not a new technology. It is a technology which has been around for a very long time in the oilfields of my State, the oilfields of Canada, and the oilfields of many places around Colorado, as the past oil efforts we have had in our country have been dependent upon us being able to put carbon dioxide into the ground. So this sequestering of carbon dioxide is something which has been going on for a very long time.

The inescapable force of global warming and environmental security is one that is with us for a long time to come, and it is something that, in the energy legislation we passed last week, is very much addressed in that legislation.

Finally, the other inescapable force is the economic reality of our Nation with respect to a clean energy economy. I think the clean energy future for the United States of America in the 21st century creates very significant opportunities. All of us know how difficult the challenge of energy is, and all of us also know there is not going to be only one answer which is going to lead us to the necessary conclusion that we need to deal with these inescapable forces; it is going to be a portfolio. It is going to have a number of different items on that menu which deal with the energy needs of our Nation and of our world. But at the end of the day, the door we have opened here with respect to a clean energy future will create millions upon millions of jobs in America. It will create millions of jobs in those areas where perhaps they have had the most difficult time in their communities, they will be creating a viable economic activity.

For me, when I look at my State of Colorado, 2 years ago out on the eastern plains, part of that forgotten America, much like the farmland of America, whether it is Oklahoma, Kansas, the Dakotas, or the eastern part of my State, we had a population which was declining in huge numbers in many of our counties, rural and remote, and withering on the vine—part of that forgotten America where most people are not able to stay there because there are such limited opportunities. Yet, in a matter of 2 years since, in the State of Colorado we adopted a new renewable energy program, and we have seen things turn around in a very significant way. We have ethanol plants that are now functioning, providing jobs, and creating hundreds of millions of gallons of ethanol in places such as Yuma and in places such as Fort Morgan.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. SALAZAR. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent for 2 more minutes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SALAZAR. So as we look at the economic opportunity that has come by way of rural America, I think that causes us all to say there is a way in which we can revitalize rural America. We do that in the legislation we passed here last week with the 36-billion-gallon renewable fuels standard and the other programs we have in there that will open the door to a new era of biofuels. It goes beyond corn because we all understand there are limitations on corn. But the Department of Energy 2005 study itself found that somewhere over 125 billion gallons of cellulosic ethanol could, in fact, be derived once we open that new technology door. The experts who have been dealing with cellulosic ethanol say we may only be a year, a year and a half away from being able to commercially deploy that technology.

I make these comments only to say that as we deal with the issue today of immigration, as we move forward to that later on this afternoon, there are other very difficult issues we face in our Nation and in our world today. Last week, we took a significant step in moving forward with a new energy future for America. I hope it is only the beginning and that time will see us develop an even more robust, effective, and successful clean energy future for America.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Kentucky is recognized.

Mr. BUNNING. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business for 12 to 15 minutes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

EMPLOYEE FREE CHOICE ACT OF 2007

Mr. BUNNING. Madam President, today I rise to speak in opposition to the so-called Employee Free Choice Act which we defeated by cloture vote. But cloture votes don't necessarily kill a bill; they have a way of resurrecting themselves, as we are about to do with the immigration bill.

Oftentimes in Congress, the people who write bills try to come up with some interesting titles for their bills, something they hope will make people remember it or tell them something about what it does. Many times, these titles can be somewhat misleading. This bill's title, the Employee Free Choice Act, takes this concept to a whole new level.

The Employee Free Choice Act actually removes choice from the employees. It removes the right of a secret ballot in elections—a cornerstone of American democracy under current law. If a group of employees wants to form a union, they must collect petition signatures or sign cards known as card checks. If 30 percent of the workers sign in favor of creating a union, then they or their employer has a right to request a secret ballot election to decide on forming a union. This election is overseen by the National Labor Relations Board, a neutral board of observers created by the Federal Government.

The misnamed Employee Free Choice Act would change all of this. This legislation would overturn 70 years of labor law and allow unions to form in workplaces without a private ballot election by the workers. Instead, if unions could twist the arms of just over half of the employees to sign cards expressing consent, then the union is automatically certified as the union for all of the workers. Unions would be allowed to collect signatures just about anyplace: at the workplace, at home, at grocery stores, and at other places. It is easy to see how union persuasion tactics could become harassment of those who do not wish to publicly declare support for union representation.

What would politics be like if Senators and Representatives simply had to convince people to sign cards instead of voting secretly at the polls? Imagine if there were no private voting booths where people could vote their conscience privately. Small armies of campaign volunteers would hang around your house, drop by your children's school, or find you at church in the hopes of securing your signature.

Then if you signed the card, your vote is made public for your employer, your neighbors or anyone else to see. This is why we currently use this secret ballot protection for union organizations in the first place.

In the past, there were concerns that elections held without privacy would be observed by employers, and then if an employee voted to unionize, they would suffer some sort of reprisals. Apparently, my colleagues supporting this bill and their allies in big labor no longer fear employer reprisals. I think it is great that they now trust employers to observe how their workers vote to join a union. We have made a lot of progress in labor-management relationships, apparently.

However, I don't think these ballot choices should be unprotected and out in the open for both union organizers and employers to see. Whenever privacy in elections is compromised, the door is open to intimidation and coercion. Why take a chance on that? It would seem that big labor feels they can increase union membership if they know how many employees are voting on organizing. I wonder what they plan to do with this information to achieve their goals of creating more unions.

Americans enjoy the right to join a union, but the decision to join a union should be freely made in private and without intimidation or coercion. That is the only way to ensure that the choice is truly free and not forced.

According to the National Labor Relations Board, drives to form unions are successful around 60 percent of the time under the rules in place now—60 percent of the time. That is the highest it has been in 20 years. Back then, the union success rate was under 50 percent. So there is no indication that it

is more difficult now to convince workers to organize a union than before. So why does big labor want to change this system? They don't want to ever lose these elections. Even though they win most of these elections, union membership has declined significantly in the past few years. The percentage of employees in labor unions is down from 20 percent in 1983 to 12 percent today. Because labor unions simply are not as attractive to workers as they once were, labor bosses have come to Congress to demand a legislative mandate designed to circumvent private ballot elections. They want more dues-paying members.

Throughout this debate, there is a clear example of hypocrisy in the argument in favor of the new card check system. Under current law, the process to certify a union is the same as the process to decertify a union. However, this bill and its supporters are silent on this matter. Apparently, they believe that when it comes to removing a union, workers will be best served by a secret ballot. But when it comes to forming one, they don't deserve that protection. This kind of logic and inconsistency is further proof that this proposal is half-baked and indefensible.

Congress should not empower big labor bosses by depriving individual workers of their right to be free of intimidation. Taking away private ballot elections and subjecting workers to undue pressure and coercion goes against the basic principles on which this country was founded. The secret ballot election must be protected at the workplace.

I understand the new majority in Congress feels they owe a great deal of debt to their allies in big labor for the success they enjoyed in November of 2006. That is why we are considering this flawed bill. As the majority, they can bring up any piece of legislation they choose. Fair enough. However, this bill is purely political payback in its worst kind of policy. I urge my colleagues—which they have done in the first instance—to vote against considering this piece of legislation, as they did when we had our cloture vote earlier today.

This is a personal aside. In 1964, I was a professional athlete. We were forming a players' union at the time so we could compete with the owners on an equal basis when it came to negotiations. We acquired 30 percent of the signatures from our players and we had an election. But it was a private-ballot election and 85 percent of the ballots collected were in favor of forming that union. I think the same should go with every union that is trying to be formed under the circumstances in today's market. Not only did we form a union, we formed one of the most successful unions in the history of the United States of America. Now all players at the major league level are covered by that union and represented by that union. The benefits derived by that player union in major league baseball have been significant—the same as most unions would have when they do it correctly with a private ballot.

I thank my colleagues for voting against cloture today. I urge them, if it comes back to the floor again, to do likewise.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

RECESS SUBJECT TO THE CALL OF THE CHAIR

Mr. REID. Madam President, at 2:15, the amendment was 10 minutes away. We called a few minutes ago and it is now 5 minutes away. I don't know how time is kept in the legislative office, but I understand that people have made minor changes and that has caused the need to reprint part of the amendment. I wish to waste as little time as possible. I think it will be a few more minutes, so maybe we can adjourn subject to the call of the Chair, and as soon as it gets here, I will let everyone know.

I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess subject to the call of the chair.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 3:54 p.m., recessed subject to the call of the Chair until 5:38 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. SALAZAR).

COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM ACT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to proceed to S. 1639 is agreed to.

Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of S. 1639, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1639) to provide for comprehensive immigration reform and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on Calendar No. 208, S. 1639, Immigration.

Ted Kennedy, Russell D. Feingold, Daniel K. Inouye, Tom Carper, Sheldon Whitehouse, Pat Leahy, Richard J. Durbin, Benjamin L. Cardin, Ken Salazar, Frank R. Lautenberg, Joe Lieberman, Dianne Feinstein, John Kerry, Charles Schumer, Ben Nelson, B. A. Mikulski, Harry Reid.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I now ask unanimous consent that there be a limitation of 26 first-degree amendments to S. 1639, the immigration bill. This is the list of the 13 Democratic amendments, the 12 Republican amendments, and 1 managers' amendment, which each are at the desk; that there be a time limitation of 1 hour equally divided for each amendment; that they be subject to relevant second-degree amendments under the same time limitation; and that upon the disposition of the amendments, the bill be read the third time and the Senate vote on passage of the bill, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. DEMINT. I object, Mr. President. We just received the substitute.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Carolina objects.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I renew my request and ask that we have an hour and a half per amendment, with the same conditions I just propounded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr DeMINT. Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, how about 2 hours per amendment, with the same conditions and provisions in the previous unanimous consent requests I made.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. COBURN. Reserving the right to object, Mr. President, with all deference to the majority leader, this procedure has excluded many of us from our right to offer amendments on the floor. I think he understands our discomfort with this process. There will not be an amount of time that will pave over the loss of our rights to offer amendments on this very important bill that needs to be dealt with. So it is not in terms of trying to delay what the majority leader is trying to do, but there is not going to be a period of time on this particular set of amendments, unless there is a set of amendments that we will be allowed, as Senators in the United States of America, to offer on behalf of our constituencies.

Mr. REID. So I take it there is an objection.

Mr. COBURN. Yes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is objection.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I say to my distinguished friend, the junior Senator from Oklahoma, he always comes directly to the point. I appreciate him and his objection.

AMENDMENT NO. 1934

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I tried to line up these 26 amendments for debate and vote. We have been told that no matter what the time per amendment is that would be allocated, that is not good enough. I also included second-degree amendments. That was objected to. I have no choice but to offer, after consultation with the Republican leadership, an amendment that contains these Democratic and Republican amendments and ask that it be divided