

exact age, that would be more than 60 years ago. He enlisted in the U.S. Navy during World War II. In 1950, at the outbreak of the Korean war, he interrupted his studies of law to return to Active military duty. Similar to so many who served our country in that period—and I meet them all the time in Connecticut, particularly World War II veterans, the ones, for instance, whose families will call and say: My dad or my grandfather thinks he may have been entitled to a medal, but he never got it—they rushed back after the war to return to their families and to their work. We check the records. In almost every case, in fact, these veterans of World War II deserve medals. In almost every case, when we give them to them, as I have had the honor to do on many occasions, the veterans of World War II will say: I didn't want this for myself. I wanted it for my grandchildren. Then they almost always say: I am no hero, I am an ordinary American called to serve our country in a time of crisis.

The truth is, these veterans and those who followed them in succeeding conflicts, including the distinguished occupant of the chair, may each think of themselves as ordinary Americans but, in fact, together they have protected America's security, saved our freedom. Those veterans of World War II defeated the threats of fascism and Naziism. Think about what the world would be like if our enemies in World War II had triumphed and think about the extraordinary period of progress and economic growth that followed after the successful conclusion of World War II.

JOHN WARNER was part of that. His service continued. In 1969, he was appointed Under Secretary of the Navy. From 1972 to 1974, he served as Secretary of the Navy. Throughout the rest of his career, including his long, distinguished, and productive service on the Senate Armed Services Committee, JOHN WARNER has shown unwavering support for the men and women of the Armed Forces and, of course, in a larger sense, unwavering support for the security of America and the ideal of freedom which was the animating impulse and purpose that motivated Jefferson and all the other Founders to create America, a country created on an ideal, with a purpose, with a mission, with a destiny. JOHN WARNER has always understood that. The fact that he is a Virginian is part of that understanding.

It has been my great honor to serve with JOHN WARNER in the Senate, particularly on the Armed Services Committee, where over the years I have come to work with him. Senator WARNER is a great gentleman, a word that can be used lightly but belongs with Senator WARNER, a person of personal grace, of civility, of honor, of good humor, someone who in his service here has always looked for the common ground. As all of us know, when we make an agreement with JOHN WAR-

NER, even on the most controversial circumstance, his word sticks. He keeps the agreement, no matter how difficult the political crosscurrent may be. He has had an extraordinary record of productive service to America and to Virginia.

One of the things I cherish is that in 1991, after Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait, I was asked to join with Senator WARNER in January of 1991 to cosponsor the resolution which authorized the Commander in Chief to take military action to push Saddam Hussein and Iraqi forces out of Kuwait which they, of course, did successfully, heroically, and with great effect on the stability and future of the Middle East. It turned out that in 2003, when it came time again for the Senate to decide whether we were prepared to authorize yet another Commander in Chief to take military action to overthrow Saddam Hussein—and I don't need to talk about the causes for which we argued for that case—Senator WARNER asked me if I would join him again as a cosponsor. It was a great honor for me to do that, and it passed overwhelmingly with a bipartisan vote.

In a very special way, notwithstanding this kind of work and work we did together, for instance, to establish the Joint Forces Command, located in Norfolk, VA, to make real the promise of joint war fighting that was inherent to the Goldwater-Nichols legislation but was not quite realized, I worked with Senator WARNER and Senator Coats, a former colleague from Indiana, to accomplish that.

Fresh in my mind and expressive of the range of JOHN WARNER's interest and of his commitment to the greater public good was the fact that at the beginning of this session of Congress, he sought to become the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Climate Change of the Environment Committee, which I was privileged to about to be chair of. We talked about the problem. JOHN didn't, as this challenge to mankind has taken shape, rush to the front of it. He was skeptical. He listened. He read. He concluded the planet is warming, that it represents a profound threat to the future of the American people, people all around the globe, and that it represents a threat to our national security, which has been the animating, driving impulse of his public service. We talked and decided to join together. I call it the Warner-Lieberman Climate Security Act; he calls it the Lieberman-Warner Climate Security Act, which is a measure of the relationship we have had and his graciousness. Without his cosponsorship, we would not have gotten it out of subcommittee, first time ever. We wouldn't have gotten it out of the Environment Committee, first time ever reported favorably on this important challenge to the Senate floor. We wouldn't have been able to achieve the support of 54 Members of the Senate, the first time a majority of Members of the Senate said we have to do some-

thing about global warming, including our colleagues, Senator MCCAIN and Senator OBAMA, which means the next President will be a proactive leader and partner with Congress in the effort to do something about climate change. It wouldn't have happened without the support of JOHN WARNER, a final extraordinary act of leadership by this great Senator.

He has a lot of great years left in him. I hope we can find a way for him to continue to be part of the work all of us have to do: One, to keep our country secure—and there is no one with more expertise and a more profound commitment to that—and, two, to get America to assume its proper leadership role in the global effort to curb global warming.

He is a dear friend, a great man. It has been a wonderful honor to serve with him. I pray he and his wife and all his family, beloved children and grandchildren, will be blessed by God with many more good years together.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The time of the majority has expired.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. I ask unanimous consent for an additional moment.

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

THE BAILOUT

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I wish to say how pleased and, frankly, relieved I am that the negotiators have reached an agreement on the economic rescue plan for our country. I found, as people began to be terribly anxious, justifiably, around our country, about their life savings, about their businesses, about their jobs, I was getting two messages from the public. One was their fear that we would not act to rescue our economy and them, and then their second fear was about what we would do to rescue our economy and them. The negotiators have both come up with a plan that will rescue our economy, will protect our taxpayers. In it, I am proud to say, is a proposal somewhat similar to one that Senator CANTWELL and I put forward for a 9/11-type commission to review the regulations of our financial institutions, to reform them so we learn from this crisis and, to the best of our ability, we make sure it never happens again.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from South Dakota.

TAX EXTENDERS

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, we are at a place, in terms of the legislative calendar, where there are lots of things piled up and not much time to get them done. I am reminded of something someone once said: In the legislative process, you can't allow the perfect to become the enemy of the good, in a place where you are lucky if the adequate even survives.

That is where we find ourselves right now with regard to the issue of the tax extender legislation. We have a bill that impacts a broad range of Americans; 24 million Americans will be subject to the alternative minimum tax if Congress does not act. We have energy tax extenders that put in jeopardy lots of investment in renewable energy sources such as wind and solar. We have students who are affected because of a student loan provision, teachers who are affected by a teacher deduction that is allowed for expenses. We have the rural schools' fix included. All these things will be impacted if Congress fails to act.

Where we are with regard to that is, the Senate has passed a bill with 93 votes that we have sent to the House. The House is now trying to send that back, broken up in different ways and with different sorts of offsets.

The point is, we have to get it done. We have to look at what the traffic will bear. We have done everything we can in the Senate. When I was a Member of the House, I used to gripe about the Senate and its rules. Why can't we send things over there and get them done in a timely way?

The reality is, to get anything comprehensive done and anything consequential, it takes 60 votes. Already it is clear we will not be able to get 60 votes. We voted on this issue numerous times in the Senate. We voted on it repeatedly, the very provisions the House is trying to get us to adopt, without success.

In fact, last week we voted. We only got 53 votes in the Senate out of the 60 that are necessary. So it seems, to me at least, we are at a point where we flat have to get this done. It is no substitute for a comprehensive energy bill, but it is the least we can do. If the least we can do is the best we can do, we ought to do at least the best we can do, which is to pass these energy tax extenders and get some of this investment in energy technologies that would help us toward our goal of energy independence and reducing carbon emissions.

I urge our colleagues on the House side to accept this bill. It is a signable bill. It is very clear we have done everything we can in the Senate with repeated votes. The proposal the House has put forward is not going to move in the Senate, and we have a very short clock to work with here in order to get something done. It should not be a question of the political winners and losers. It ought to be about the American economy and the American people. We need to do something that is a winner for them, and that ought to be moving this piece of legislation in the House. It has 93 votes in the Senate. It is there. It is awaiting action.

It is absolutely clear the proposal they have sent here cannot secure the necessary votes to move. That bill that is over there will be signed by the President. It moves us in a direction of energy independence and puts some en-

ergy policy in place that is important to the future of this country, as well as all the other tax provisions I mentioned, including preventing 24 million American families from being hit by the alternative minimum tax at the end of the year. So I hope, again, this legislation will pass. I urge my colleagues on the House side to take it up and pass the Senate bill.

Mr. President, I yield back the remainder of my time.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

FEDERAL RAILROAD SAFETY IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2007

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the House message to accompany H.R. 2095, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Message from the House of Representatives to accompany H.R. 2095, entitled an Act to amend title 49, United States Code, to prevent railroad fatalities, injuries, and hazardous materials releases, to authorize the Federal Railroad Safety Administration, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Reid amendment No. 5677 (to the motion to concur in the amendment of the House of Representatives to the amendment of the Senate to the bill), to establish the enactment date.

Reid amendment No. 5678 (to amendment No. 5677), of a perfecting nature.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the time until 12:15 will be controlled by the Republican leader, and the time from 12:15 until 12:30 will be controlled by the majority leader.

The Senator from Texas is recognized.

Mrs. HUTCHISON. Mr. President, I rise to talk about the rail safety and Amtrak authorization bill. This is a bill that I think will move forward a major alternative option for our passengers and for the mobility of our country—Amtrak.

Most people think of Amtrak as the Northeast corridor, and going from Boston all the way through New York and Washington and on down through Florida. That is a very important route. In fact, that route has more than 2,600 trains operating every day. So it is a major part of our transportation infrastructure in what is called the Northeast corridor.

However, we have a national system for Amtrak as well. It is a national system that goes, of course, down the east coast, as I mentioned, but it also goes down the west coast. It goes all the way up and down the west coast. It has lines that go across the top of our country, across the bottom of our country east to west, and right down the middle, what is called the Texas

Eagle, which goes from Chicago, down through St. Louis, down into Texas, and across to San Antonio, where it meets the Sunset Limited, which goes from California to Florida.

So we have the skeleton of a national system. It is a system we must preserve. It is a system that has become more and more of an option as gasoline prices have increased. We saw how many people went to train use after 9/11, when the aviation industry was shut down. It is something we must support and keep.

Now we are increasing ridership every year. During fiscal year 2007, 25.8 million passengers, representing the fifth straight fiscal year of record ridership, boarded Amtrak. Ridership is up 7 percent more over this time last year, as people have gone to the trains because of the high gasoline prices.

This bill authorizes \$2.6 billion annually over 5 years. It authorizes that amount. In Congress we authorize, and then the appropriations come later on an annual basis. And \$2.6 billion would be the ceiling for the next 5 years for Amtrak. But to put this in perspective, when we are talking about alternatives in our transportation system, we have authorized, in SAFETEA-LU, the highway authorization bill, \$40 billion. The FAA bill, introduced in this Congress, proposes to invest \$17 billion annually in aviation. Last year we passed a Water Resources Development Act authorizing \$23 billion over the next 2 years.

We are talking about \$13 billion over 5 years—\$2.6 billion each year, which is the very least of the authorizations of any of our transportation systems. If included with the number of passengers served by our aviation industry, in 2007, Amtrak would rank eighth in the number of passengers served, with a market share of right at 4 percent. There are nearly twice as many passengers on an Amtrak train as on a domestic airline flight.

So we have crafted a bill—and I have to tell you honestly, this is not my bill. Actually, it started with Trent Lott. Senator LAUTENBERG on the majority side now has continued to be a leader in this field. I support the bill FRANK LAUTENBERG and Trent Lott negotiated because it is right for our country. I have always said, for me, Amtrak is national or nothing.

There was a time in this Congress when nobody ever talked national. They only talked about saving the Northeast corridor. Of course, that is the rail line that is owned by Amtrak. The other rail lines mostly are not separated, although I would like to see that changed. But we are using freight rail, and we are at the behest of the freight rail lines. So it is not as efficient. But it is very important we keep those relationships and work toward having the separate lines on those rail rights of way. Today, we are talking about a national system.

There was a time when we only talked about the Northeast corridor.