

Mr. REID. Mr. President, when the bill is laid down, would the Chair announce how much time there is for Senator MCCONNELL and me to divide?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair will do so.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

ADVANCING AMERICA'S PRIORITIES ACT—MOTION TO PROCEED

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 3297, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar 894, S. 3297, the Advancing America's Priorities Act.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the time until 4 p.m. shall be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

Mr. REID. So we each have approximately 15 minutes?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator is correct.

Mr. REID. I designate that Senator DURBIN take 7½ minutes and Senator BOXER take 7½ minutes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Who yields time?

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I wish to just ask a question.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. DOMENICI. While my leader, the Republican leader, is here on the floor, I had thought that I was going to speak for 5 minutes following you, but I understand that our side will only have 15 minutes.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I would say to my friend from New Mexico, I have spoken, so whatever time remains on this side—

Mr. DOMENICI. You want him to have? That is fine with me. I will speak afterward.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, how much time remains on this side?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. There is 15½ minutes.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the time on our side will be used by the Senator from Oklahoma.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Who yields time?

The Senator from California is recognized.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I understand the time is divided between myself and Senator DURBIN. How much time do I have?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator has 7½ minutes.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that following Senator BOXER, we go to Senator COBURN and then to Senator DURBIN.

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

Mr. COBURN. Reserving the right to object, if the majority leader would agree, I wish us to have a back and forth debate. I would let Senator DURBIN have the last word, if that is OK with the majority leader.

Mr. REID. I don't understand that. We don't have that much time.

Mr. COBURN. I suggest that the last 2 minutes of debate be controlled by Senator DURBIN, and the rest be divided equally among us, as we have it divided now.

Mr. REID. That is fine with me, Mr. President.

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

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I wish to spend the 7 minutes talking about four bills that are in this package from the Environment and Public Words Committee, all of which have broad bipartisan support, and I want to correct the RECORD on some of the things Senator COBURN stated about one of the bills.

The bills are the Captive Primate Safety Act, the Beach Protection Act, the Chesapeake Bay Gateway Act continuing authorization, and the Appalachian Regional Development Act amendment. These bills are all bipartisan and they represent a diverse background of support in the country and in the Senate.

The Appalachian Regional Development Act amendment reauthorizes and improves the Appalachian Regional Development Act of 1965. The ARDA is a Federal-State partnership that works with the people of Appalachia toward self-sustaining economic development and to improve the quality of life in all, or portions, of 13 States—Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia. The commission's primary function is to support economic development in the Appalachian area, critical infrastructure to provide a climate for business, growth, and industry that will create jobs in the regions that need that help. The bill strengthens existing law and provides better assistance to counties in the region that are most at risk of becoming economically distressed. The bipartisan support for this bill is very strong. It includes Senators VOINOVICH, ALEXANDER, BROWN, BURR, BYRD, CARDIN, CLINTON, COCHRAN, DOLE, GRAHAM, MCCONNELL, MIKULSKI, ROCKEFELLER, SCHUMER, SESSIONS, SHELBY, SPECTER, and WARNER. We certainly hope this package passes because this area of the Nation requires this commission to continue its work.

Next, the Beach Protection Act. We spent a lot of time talking about offshore oil drilling. Let the RECORD show that everyone in the Senate supports offshore oil drilling. The difference between Democrats and Republicans is that they want to open pristine areas off the coast, where we protect a \$70 billion coastal economy, while the oil companies hold leases to 68 million

acres and they are not drilling. So we all say drill now to these oil companies. But as far as opening our pristine coast and jeopardizing the coastal economy, that doesn't make much sense. What will happen is you will give the oil companies more assets on their balance sheet, and they are still not drilling the acres they have, the 68 million acres, plus they have access to another 28 million acres in the Alaska Naval Reserve. I believe they have developed 3 million of those acres. It has about three times as much oil as ANWR. This is so much bluster and there is nothing to it—except the oil companies' power to be shown on the floor of the Senate by my friends, the Republicans.

Regardless of those differences, we want to protect our beaches. We don't want to have our kids swimming in polluted water. They want to enjoy the clean, safe, healthy, pristine beaches. The Beach Act will do that. Essentially, there are improvements that are greatly needed so that the waters are tested and people know it is safe to swim. The bipartisan support for this bill includes Senators LAUTENBERG, VOINOVICH, WARNER, BROWN, CARDIN, CLINTON, DURBIN, KERRY, KLOBUCHAR, MENENDEZ, SCHUMER, and STABENOW.

The Chesapeake Bay Gateway Act will help to connect the public with the Chesapeake Bay and its rivers to 150 exceptional parks, wildlife refuges, and historic trails. It is one of America's and the world's most important estuaries. The American people put a great amount of resources into protecting and restoring this great water body, and now this bill will help the public understand, visit, and enjoy this spectacular bay. I applaud the bipartisan work that went into this bill. The work was done by Senators SPECTER, BIDEN, CARPER, and CASEY, and the lead on this was taken by the Senators from Maryland and the Senators from Virginia.

The last one I will talk about is Captive Primate Safety Act, and why this bill will help address a serious issue. More than 132 people, including 29 children, have been injured by nonhuman primates, and the fact is they should not be pets. One of the statements I read that Senator COBURN made is that this is going to stop the ability of scientists to use these nonhuman primates in science. That is false. That is exempted from this. He also made reference to the fact that we ought to ban them from coming into the country. The fact is that, since 1975, they have been banned from coming into the country. But they are in the country and the fact is there is interstate trade here. It is a real problem.

The CDC has said they have serious concerns about the transmission of communicable diseases here, and they stated:

These animal species have been linked to transmission of certain diseases to humans, and individuals involved in transporting animals are especially at risk for infection.

So even though we have had these concerns and we passed legislation banning their importation, the CDC is still greatly concerned that there is a nonhuman primate pet trade in this country. So, clearly, the statements that have been made on this have been incorrect. Trade or transportation of these animals for zoos is exempt. Scientific research facilities are exempt and certain other regulated entities. Groups like Helping Hands, which provides highly trained and carefully controlled nonhuman primates as helping animals to severely disabled people

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

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for 30 seconds.

Mr. DURBIN. I yield 30 more seconds.

Mrs. BOXER. Last week, I received a letter from the Humane Society highlighting the need for this legislation, and another letter of support from over 25 groups, including Defenders of Wildlife.

I will close with this. When Senator VITTER comes together with me, that is unusual. But we came together on this bill. Senator LIEBERMAN is on board, as are Senators LAUTENBERG, MENENDEZ, and ENSIGN. So you are looking at a bill that has been carefully thought out. I urge strong support for this package.

I yield the floor.

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

Mr. COBURN. Will the Chair advise me when I have used 7 minutes?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Yes, the Chair will do so.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I listened to the majority leader and the distinguished colleague from California. I anticipate what I will hear from the Senator from Illinois.

One of the first observations I had is that we have shut down debate on the Senate today because we came in at 3 o'clock. We have 30 minutes to debate whether on a motion to proceed, we will proceed to spend \$11 billion. We can dispute, if we are going to authorize it, whether we intend to spend it. That is what your press release says, Senator DURBIN; that is what Senator BOXER's says. You intend to spend it. If you don't intend to spend it, then offset it and the authorizations won't make any difference. It is \$10 billion-plus in new spending. It creates 36 new Federal programs, some of which I am for. It puts a ban on the sale of nonhuman primates across State lines. That is probably not a big deal.

We could be spending time on true American energy independence, which has to do with national security. We could spend time on lowering gas prices. We could spend time on eliminating wasteful Washington spending. The statement by the minority leader was that he will offer us a chance to come back to this, but we are going to spend 60 hours on this, 30 hours

postcloture and 30 hours on the other, so we won't ever get back to energy, and he knows that. We will not get back to energy if we take up this bill.

So the question that is before us is—today, the President announced, with our help—and the President cannot spend any money without Congress's help—we will have the highest budget deficit on record in this country—highest ever. It is \$2,900 per man, woman, and child in this country—money we are going to spend that we don't have and that we are charging to your children and grandchildren.

This is a debate about priorities. Nine of the bills in this package I have no objection to. They could have gone through. The majority leader knows that. There are about five of the bills I adamantly oppose. We have 46,800 dog bites a year. That is not business we should be working on now. That is local. So is subhuman primates. If you count the money we are going to steal from Social Security, that is another \$100 billion. We are going to take it and put an IOU in for Social Security.

What is this bill about? This bill is about trying to bust the process here, where we start thinking about the future. We are going to say it doesn't spend any money, that it doesn't have any effect on the budget. We are going to say there is no real cost until it gets appropriated. But the fact is if we authorize another \$10 billion in spending—and I note also in the letter that the majority leader asked to be submitted into the RECORD, if authorized and appropriated, it would spend \$11 billion.

Well, it is unconscionable to me that someone would support a bill that did not work hard to make sure it is appropriated. If you are not going to do that, then you are not true to the very people you are saying you want this bill to take action for. The people supporting this bill have every intention of having the money spent. Let's not kid ourselves. So if the intention is to spend the money, the money is going to get spent. That is how we got to a national debt—that is how we have an \$85 trillion unfunded liability in front of us. It is not wrong to want to try to fix that. It is not wrong to try to address issues. The ALS Registry is something the CDC can already do. As a matter of fact, their own quote on it was that they spend only \$29 million a year on ALS. We are going to spend \$75 million on a registry that doesn't cure anybody. Why don't we spend \$75 million additional on research for ALS? Why don't we spend this \$10 billion at NIH so we cover all of the diseases, where we can make a major impact? No, we want to respond to interest groups and lobbyists, and we want to go home and say we have done something, when we have not done anything except raise costs.

There is \$300 billion worth of waste, without a doubt, every year that occurs—waste, fraud, or duplication in this country. This body doesn't want to offset it.

The majority leader, as well as many of the Members and authors of these other bills, have been offered commonsense offsets to pay for their bills. Just like every family does, when you have something new you want to do and you have a limited budget, what do you do? You make a choice, you decide a priority, and then you decide what you would not do so you can do what you want to do. We don't do that in the Senate. We conveniently charge it to our grandkids. What nobody realizes is this past Saturday, the Senate and the House increased the debt limit by \$800 billion. Most Americans didn't even know that. It was tucked very neatly into the housing bill. We increased the debt limit \$800 billion—\$800 billion more we are going to borrow.

People will say: Senator COBURN, you are for the war, you supported the war. But I did not vote for the appropriations bills for the war, and there is a reason for it. Because we should be paying for it. We should be making the hard choices instead of charging the war to our kids.

This is a debate I am glad we are finally having. Part of me says I would love to get on it, but the most important thing we need to do and the most important thing the Senate needs to be doing is working on energy.

I reserve the remainder of my time.

Mr. WEBB. Mr. President, I rise today in support of the Advancing America's Priorities Act, S. 3297, which contains a provision that would provide much needed funding for the Washington Metropolitan Transit Authority, WMATA.

This provision mirrors the National Capital Transportation Amendments Act of 2007, S. 1446, which I proudly cosponsored with Senators CARDIN, MIKULSKI, and WARNER.

In short, the Metro funding provision would authorize \$1.5 billion over 10 years for Metro to finance capital and preventive maintenance projects for the Metrorail system. The Federal funding would share the funding burden with the States because the money would be contingent on the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia jointly matching the Federal contribution towards Washington Metro's capital projects.

Appropriate funding for the Metro system is critically important to our federal workforce, millions of tourists who visit our Nation's Capital area, as well as the millions of people who live around Washington, DC. I have worked diligently with my Senate and House colleagues for the past 2 years to pass this legislation, and I ask my colleagues to help secure passage of this provision this week.

Metrorail and Metrobus ridership continue to grow as more than 1 million riders on average per weekday choose Metro as their preferred mode of transit for traveling around the National Capital Region. As the price of gasoline has soared, more people are turning to Metro as their primary

mode of transportation. I would note that in fiscal year 2008, 215 million customers rode Metrorail. That is 7 million more customers than in 2007. In fact, 22 out of 25 of Metrorail top ridership days have occurred since April of this year. And 133 million customers rode Metrobus in fiscal year 08, which is the highest yearly total ever, an increase of 1.4 million relative to 2007. New funding authorized in this legislation would provide the necessary resources to increase bus and rail capacity and meet forecasted ridership demands, before the system and region become totally mired in congestion.

The federal role in supporting Metro is clear, with a long track record to draw upon. Washington Metro began building the rail system in 1969 with Federal funding authorized under the National Capital Transportation Act of 1969. On two separate occasions, Congress has authorized additional funding for Metro construction and capital improvements. According to a 2006 Government Accountability Office report:

WMATA provides transportation to and from work for a substantial portion of the federal workforce, and federal employees' use of WMATA's services is encouraged by General Services Administration guidelines that instruct federal agencies to locate their facilities near mass transit stops whenever possible. WMATA also accommodated increased passenger loads and extends its operating hours during events related to the federal government's presence in Washington, DC, such as presidential inaugurations and funerals, and celebrations and demonstrations on the National Mall.

In fact, during rush hour, Federal employees account for over 40 percent of Metro ridership. The Metro system was also critical to the evacuation of Washington, DC, following the 2001 terrorist attacks. Metro was deemed a "national security asset" in a Federal security assessment conducted after 9/11. In short, the operation of the Federal Government would be nearly impossible without the Metro system and the Federal Government's emergency evacuation and recovery plans rely heavily on Metro.

The future of Metro and its continued success relies upon consistent support from the Federal Government and the regional localities it serves. Now is the time for the Federal Government to commit itself to providing more long-term Federal funding for the Washington Metro system. Together, along with our jurisdictional partners, we must continue to invest in the transit system that has brought so many benefits not only to the region, but also to the Federal Government and the entire nation. I urge my colleagues to support passage of this bill.

Mr. INOUE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following letters be printed in the RECORD relating to S. 3297, the Advancing America's Priorities Act.

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

JULY 28, 2008.

Hon. HARRY REID,
*Senate Majority Leader, U.S. Capitol,
Washington, DC.*

Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
*Senate Minority Leader, U.S. Capitol,
Washington, DC.*

DEAR MAJORITY LEADER REID AND MINORITY LEADER MCCONNELL: The undersigned members of the ocean and coastal research, education, and conservation community would like to thank you for your strong support of ocean and coastal science and conservation in the U.S. Senate. We strongly support S. 3297 because it includes a number of important ocean and coastal related bills—Hydrographic Services, Ocean Exploration and Mapping, Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observation System, Ocean Acidification Research and Monitoring Act, and the Sea Grant Reauthorization. Because of the inclusion of these bills, we collectively urge the Senate to pass this important legislation at the earliest available opportunity.

These bills will increase our understanding of coastal, ocean and Great Lake ecosystems and promote both conservation and sustainable use. All of the bills have passed the House of Representatives and have been reported out of the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee with bipartisan support.

With more than 50 percent of the U.S. population living in coastal counties, these regions are vital contributors to our economy, quality of life and national security. With an ever-changing climate, increasing natural hazards, and declining fisheries, we need the tools to protect and manage our ocean assets and better understand how ocean and coastal ecosystems respond to natural and human-related hazards.

We hope you will demonstrate your continued commitment to strengthening our Nation's understanding and conservation of the oceans through Senate consideration of these measures.

Sincerely,

National Association of Marine Laboratories, Sea Grant Association, National Federation of Regional Associations for Coastal and Ocean Observing, Reinsurance Association of America, Campaign for Environmental Literacy, League of Conservation Voters, Association of Zoos and Aquariums, University Corporation for Atmospheric Research, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, Coastal States Organization, National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges, Maryland Sea Grant.

University of Southern Mississippi, MK & CO, University of Washington, Ocean Initiative, Natural Resources Defense Council, Oceana, Marine Conservation Biology Institute, School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences, Stony Brook University, North Carolina Sea Grant Program, Florida Sea Grant College Program, USC Sea Grant, New York Sea Grant.

Skidaway Institute of Oceanography, Georgia, Savannah State University, Delaware Sea Grant, Baruch Institute, University of South Carolina, Chesapeake Biological Laboratory, University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science, New Hampshire Sea Grant, University of New Hampshire Marine Program, Annis Water Resources Institute, Grand Valley State University, Michigan, Alaska SeaLife Center, Center for Coastal Studies, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, Harte Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies, Texas, Maine Sea Grant.

Pennsylvania Sea Grant, National Institute for Undersea Science and Tech-

nology, University of Mississippi, Hawaii Sea Grant, Romberg Tiburon Center, San Francisco State University, Michigan Sea Grant, Louisiana Sea Grant, Rhode Island Sea Grant, Woods Hole Sea Grant, Center for Marine and Coastal Sciences, California Polytechnic State University, University of Wisconsin Sea Grant Institute and Water Resources Institute, South Carolina Sea Grant Consortium.

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS FOR COASTAL AND OCEAN OBSERVING,

JULY 28, 2008.

Hon. HARRY REID,
Senate Majority Leader, Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, DC.

Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
Senate Minority Leader, Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, DC.

Hon. DANIEL INOUE,
Chair, Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation, Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATORS REID, MCCONNELL AND INOUE: We write to express our strong support for S. 3297, "Advancing America's Priorities Act" and urge its quick adoption. The bill contains several ocean and coastal provisions that are needed to provide the nation with the understanding and tools necessary to address issues now facing our oceans and Great Lakes. These include:

Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observation System Act of 2008, Hydrographic Services Improvement Act of 2008, NOAA Undersea Research Program Act of 2008, Ocean and Coastal Mapping Integration Act, National Sea Grant College Program Amendments of 2008, and Federal Ocean Acidification Research and Monitoring Act of 2008.

Together, these legislative acts create a foundation for improving our understanding of our nation's oceans and coasts and how they will respond to changing conditions and for providing information to the variety of citizens who depend on them. As evidenced by the impacts of El Nino events, our oceans affect all citizens. The oceans are inextricably linked to weather and climate and in order to respond to current and future climate change impacts, we must increase our knowledge in this realm.

The National Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS) is a vital tool for tracking, predicting, managing, and adapting to changes in our nation's waters. The Senate has passed IOOS legislation twice since 2002 in recognition of the nation's need to provide predictions and forecasts necessary for safe maritime operations, minimize losses from extreme storms, optimize ocean resources and sustain healthy ecosystems.

We thank you for your continued support of ocean and Great Lakes issues and for passage of this important bill.

Sincerely,

MOLLY MCCAMMON,
Chair, National Federation of Regional Associations for Coastal and Ocean Observing, Alaska Ocean Observing System.

JULY 28, 2008

Hon. HARRY REID,
*Senate Majority Leader
U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC.*

Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
*Senate Minority Leader,
U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MAJORITY LEADER REID AND MINORITY LEADER MCCONNELL: On behalf of the 95

members of the Consortium for Ocean Leadership, the Joint Ocean Commission Initiative, the 125 members of the National Association of Marine Laboratories and the 31 states that make up the Sea Grant Association, we would like to thank you for your strong support of ocean science and conservation in the U.S. Senate and urge prompt passage of S 3297—Advancing America's Priorities Act, Title V, Subpart B—Oceans of S 3297 contains six vital ocean research, conservation, and education bills:

Part I—Hydrographic Services Improvement Act Amendments of 2008.

Part II—Ocean Exploration.

Part III—Ocean and Coastal Mapping Integration Act.

Part IV—National Sea Grant College Program Amendments Act of 2008.

Part V—Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observation System Act of 2008.

Part VI—Federal Ocean Acidification Research and Monitoring Act of 2008.

These bills are consistent with the extensive analyses and recommendations of the Pew Oceans Commission, the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy, the President's Ocean Action Plan, and the Administration's Ocean Research Priorities Plan. Collectively these bills will significantly advance our understanding of coastal, ocean and Great Lake ecosystems, climate change, and promote both conservation and sustainable use of our ocean resources. All of the bills have passed the Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee and the House of Representatives with bipartisan support.

With more than 50 percent of the U.S. population living in coastal counties, these regions are essential contributors to our economy, quality of life, maritime safety, national competitiveness, and national security. With an ever-changing climate, increasing natural hazards, and declining fisheries and reduced water quality, we need the tools to conserve and manage our ocean assets and better understand how ocean and coastal ecosystems respond to natural and human-related hazards.

These provisions would: (1) fuel exploration and inspire future generations of ocean explorers, scientists, marine, and industry leaders; (2) foster the development and integration of ocean observational systems to protect public health through the identification of marine toxins and pollutants in coastal areas; (3) improve prediction of and warnings of tsunamis, hurricanes, El Niño events and other natural hazards; (4) enhance homeland security, support maritime operations and collect important information needed to address global warming, improve ocean health and provide for the protection, sustainable use and enjoyment of ocean resources.

We hope you will demonstrate your continued commitment to strengthening our Nation's understanding and conservation of the oceans through quick passage of S 3297.

Sincerely,

ROBERT B. GAGOSIAN,
*President, Consortium
for Ocean Leader-
ship.*

JAMES D. WATKINS,
*Admiral, U.S. Navy
(Retired), Chairman,
U.S. Commission on
Ocean Policy, Co-
Chair, Joint Ocean
Commission Initia-
tive.*

JAMES SANDERS,
*President, National
Association of Ma-
rine Laboratories.*

LEON E. PANETTA,
*Chair, Pew Oceans
Commission, Co-*

*Chair, Joint Ocean
Commission Initia-
tive.*

PAUL ANDERSON,
*President, Sea Grant
Association.*

THE NATURE CONSERVANCY,
Arlington, VA, July 28, 2008.

Hon. HARRY REID,
*Senate Majority Leader,
U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC.*

Hon. MITCH MCCONNELL,
*Senate Minority Leader,
U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MAJORITY LEADER REID AND MINORITY LEADER MCCONNELL: I write to thank you for including the Oceans subtitle in S. 3297, the Advancing America's Priorities Act. The Nature Conservancy supports the six pieces of oceans legislation included in the Oceans subtitle—Hydrographic Services Improvement Act Amendments of 2008, Ocean Exploration, Ocean and Coastal Mapping Integration Act, Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observation System Act of 2008, National Sea Grant College Program Amendments Act of 2008, and Federal Ocean Acidification Research and Monitoring Act of 2008.

These bills will increase our understanding of and ability to effectively conserve and manage ocean and coastal ecosystems. All have passed the House of Representatives and have been reported out of the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee with bipartisan support.

Covering more than 70 percent of the Earth's surface, oceans are some of the most productive yet threatened natural systems in the world. Once considered a limitless and inexhaustible resource, the demands of a growing population are damaging marine ecosystems and depleting ocean and coastal resources. New and innovative approaches are needed to maintain and restore these systems in order to sustain the communities that depend upon them. The bills in the Oceans subtitle of S. 3297 would provide valuable science and information to enable these efforts.

I commend the work of the Senate and the Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee to pass legislation to improve ocean and coastal science and data. The Nature Conservancy looks forward to continuing to work with the Senate to pass three additional pieces of important ocean and coastal conservation legislation before the end of this session—the Coral Reef Conservation Amendments Act of 2007, the Coastal and Estuarine Land Protection Act, and the Ballast Water Treatment Act of 2007.

I urge you to continue to support ocean and coastal science and conservation and thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

LYNNE ZEITLIN HALE,
Director, Global Marine Team.

Mr. LEAHY, Mr. President, last week, I joined the majority leader in introducing S. 3297, the Advancing America's Priorities Act. The majority leader selected three dozen legislative items from the jurisdiction of seven Senate committees, including eight Judiciary Committee bills, for this effort. These are all measures with bipartisan support and, we believe, the support of a strong bipartisan majority of the Senate. I have moved several such bills through the Judiciary Committee only to be stymied by objection once on the Senate calendar. All of the Judiciary bills have already passed the House

with overwhelming support. Each of these bills has the support of all Democratic Senators. Each has been stalled on the Senate floor by Republican objection. I hope that all Senators will now join us to support this important effort and finally pass legislation helpful to the American people that should have passed long ago by unanimous consent.

After more than 7 years of failed policies from the Bush administration, the American people are suffering. Americans are feeling the effects of a very real recession which has left them with fewer jobs and record high prices. People are rightly worried about keeping their communities and their children safe from crime as well as terrorism.

Americans are looking to us in Congress to work to solve these vexing problems. We had an opportunity in this Congress to come together across party lines to do the work of the American people. Instead, regrettably some have chosen to obstruct our progress and stand in the way of legislation designed to help hard working Americans.

The Judiciary Committee has worked throughout this Congress to advance the priorities of Americans. We have reported legislation to support local law enforcement to make our cities and towns safe from crime that has now gone back up after consistent declines, to protect our children from exploitation and poverty, to ensure the civil rights and voting rights of Americans, to combat fraud and corruption, and to keep us secure without sacrificing our values.

Many pieces of legislation with broad bipartisan support that we have managed to move through the Judiciary Committee have then stalled on the Senate floor due to obstruction. The majority leader has been forced to resort to extraordinary measures to try to pass these bills, which should have sailed through without opposition. Some of these bills, including several important pieces of legislation that have been reported from the Judiciary Committee this Congress, have been incorporated by the majority leader into the Advancing America's Priorities Act. Congress should promptly pass this important legislation, which will help the American people.

One key bill in this package is the reauthorization of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act. It is astonishing that in the richest country in the world, millions of our young people face homelessness and the many dangers of life on the streets.

When the Senate Judiciary Committee held a hearing on this issue in April, we heard from Mark Redmond and Michael Hutchins of Spectrum Youth and Family Services in Burlington, VT. They told us how much the act is needed to help young people in Vermont and around the country. Mr. Hutchins had been homeless himself as a young person and saw first hand how the programs this act funds

can help children turn their lives around and give back to their communities.

I also held a hearing in Rutland, VT, this winter on crime in small cities and towns, which emphasized the need for programs to help young people in difficult circumstances. The Runaway and Homeless Youth Act reauthorization will double the funding states like Vermont are guaranteed to receive for programs to benefit runaway and homeless young people. This bill will help our young people, and we should pass it right away.

Another important piece of legislation included in this package is the Emmett Till Unsolved Civil Rights Crime Act, which I have been working with Senator DODD, Congressman LEWIS, and others to pass for years. In 1955, the brutal murder of a 14-year-old African-American teenager named Emmett Till stirred the conscience of our country. Unfortunately, no one has ever been punished for this tragic and brutal murder. Last week, I met Simeon Wright, Emmett Till's cousin, who was with Mr. Till on the horrible night he was kidnapped. We must share Mr. Wright's commitment to fighting for justice after so many years.

The Till bill would help law enforcement to finally track down those whose violent acts during a period of national turmoil remain unpunished. Fifty-three years after Emmett Till's murder, his family and the families of hundreds of other Americans who lost their lives in the fight for equal rights still await justice.

This legislation provides necessary tools for our Federal Government, in cooperation with state and local officials, to vigorously investigate and prosecute these cases. By passing this legislation, we honor Emmett Till and all those who sacrificed their lives advancing civil rights. It is disgraceful that it has taken us so long to take this basic step to honor their memories and pursue justice too long delayed. It is incredible that some continue to obstruct these efforts.

The Advancing America's Priorities Act also includes legislation to help law enforcement cope with mentally ill offenders, and to protect our children from the scourges of drugs, child pornography, and child exploitation.

It seems particularly perverse that legislation meant to protect our children and grandchildren from the dangers of the modern world has become the subject of partisan obstructionism. This legislative package includes the PROTECT Our Children Act, which Senator BIDEN has championed and which would streamline the government's efforts to investigate and prevent the exploitation of children. It also includes two separate measures that strengthen the laws against the despicable practice of child pornography. I have worked hard with many of my colleagues to pass these and other child protection bills, and we should delay no longer passing them

into law. The Effective Child Pornography Prosecution Act passed the House 409-0 last November. The Enhancing the Effective Prosecution of Child Pornography provision passed the House 416-0 last November. The PROTECT Our Children Act passed the House 415-2 last November. The Drug Endangered Children Act passed the House last September 389-4. All of these bills have been cleared by all Democratic Senators, and all are included in the bill being brought before the Senate by the majority leader.

Senator COBURN has now introduced a new bill, S. 3344, which combines several of the pieces of child protection legislation contained in the Advancing America's Priorities Act package and other preexisting legislation. Senator COBURN has prevented many of these same bills from passing for many months. He has chosen not to work with the majority leader on the Advancing America's Priorities Act to secure passage of the many important bills contained within it. He has also chosen not to work with the sponsors, Democratic and Republican, House and Senate, of the child protection bills he has co-opted, and he did not bother to attend a Senate Judiciary subcommittee hearing which squarely addressed one of those bills.

Instead, he has taken these bills, drafted and introduced by other Senators and House members, and without their input or permission, combined them and introduced them as his own legislation. Moreover, he has combined them in a way that appears calculated to attract opposition, and he has included provisions that have not been carefully vetted or considered. Where the majority leader has worked with many others in the Senate and House to collect important bills with bipartisan, bicameral support that can pass into law and increase protection for our children, Senator COBURN instead has appropriated the work of others in Congress in a way that is unfair and bound to fail. That is not legislating. It is more showboating and obstruction. We have had too much of those tactics already.

Sadly, obstruction through Republican holds is just one example of the ways some have chosen to hamper progress on so many issues in this Congress. They have also boycotted meetings to consider legislation, used Senate rules to prevent hearings or cut them short, and filibustered more than 80 times.

Republicans boycotted the most recent business meeting of the Judiciary Committee thereby blocking the committee from obtaining a quorum and considering important legislation. At that meeting, the committee was to consider a bipartisan juvenile justice bill, which reauthorized key programs aimed at making our communities safer and keeping our children out of the criminal justice system; bipartisan legislation to reauthorize the William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Pro-

tection Act, which would strengthen our efforts to stop the abhorrent practice of human trafficking around the world; and other matters.

They have threatened to boycott again this week. That would prevent action on the Ronald Reagan Centennial Commission, a resolution to honor national historically Black colleges and universities, and other important bipartisan measures.

We have seen all manners of obstructionism since the beginning of this Congress, with a minority of Republican members using filibuster after filibuster to thwart the will of the majority of the Senate from doing the business of the American people. Republican filibusters prevented Senate majorities from passing the climate change bill; the Employee Free Choice Act; the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act; the DC Voting Rights Act; the Renewable Fuels, Consumer Protection, and Energy Efficiency Act of 2007; the Renewable Energy and Job Creation Act of 2008; the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act of 2008; the Consumer-First Energy Act; and the Warm in Winter and Cool in Summer Act, to bring much needed relief to poor families who struggle to heat and cool their homes in a time of soaring gas prices.

These are critical pieces of legislation to address urgent priorities like the energy crisis, the environment, voting rights, health care, and fair wages for working men and women. All of them had a support of the majority of the Senate. And all were blocked by a minority of Republican Senators bent on preventing us from making progress. Republicans have now filibustered more than 80 pieces of legislation in this Congress. More than 80. We can only imagine what we could have accomplished in this Congress with cooperation rather than obstruction.

The list goes on. Republican objection has blocked legislation to ensure that law enforcement officers can obtain bulletproof vests, to strengthen efforts to investigate and prosecute public corruption, to give much needed resources to state and local law enforcement, to break the grip of a cartel on oil prices, to prohibit war profiteering, to train prosecutors, and to teach children to use the internet safely, just to name some of the examples. And those are just examples of legislation reported by the Judiciary Committee that has been obstructed. Last week I made statements delineating a dozen and a half bills in addition to those included by the majority leader in S.3297, the Advancing America's Priorities Act. Other committees have similar lists.

This long list of priorities unaddressed is even longer if we include the many important bills President Bush has vetoed since the beginning of this Congress. This list includes legislation to fund stem cell research

to fight debilitating and deadly diseases, to extend and expand the successful State Children's Health Insurance Program that would have provided health insurance to more of the millions of American children without it, to set a timetable for bringing American troops home from the disastrous war in Iraq, and to ban waterboarding and help restore America as a beacon for the rule of law.

This is not about partisan posturing. The American people are suffering, and it is time for Congress to start working to make their lives better. Time is running short in this Congress. It is past time to end the partisan gamesmanship and idiosyncratic objections and make progress on behalf of the American people. It is time for us to get to work and do what we can to improve the lives of Americans. That is what I have been trying to do throughout this Congress. The majority leader, with the Advancing America's Priorities Act, has given us a chance to take a small but significant step in the right direction. I hope, after 18 months of unnecessary obstruction, all Senators are finally ready to join us in doing the work of the American people.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, while I do not believe that the provisions of title VI, subtitle A of S. 3297, corresponding to the National Capital Transportation Amendments Act, constitute a congressionally directed spending item, I certify, out of caution, that neither I nor my immediate family has a pecuniary interest in the aforementioned provisions, consistent with the requirements of paragraph 9 of rule XLIV of the Standing Rules of the Senate.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, how much time remains on the Democratic side?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. There is 6½ minutes remaining.

Mr. DURBIN. How much remains on the Republican side?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. There is 7 minutes 54 seconds remaining.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, it is time for this debate. No, this debate is overdue. It is about time the American people understand the choices we are making on the floor of the Senate. Every month this President asks us for \$12 billion to \$15 billion to wage the war. Is it paid for? No. It is added to the deficit. We are told we have to do it; we have to do it, not just for the troops—no one wants to see the troops go without—but because it is our moral responsibility, according to the Bush administration, to rebuild Iraq. We liberated them. We removed their dictator. We have lost over 4,000 of our best and bravest lives and thousands injured. But month after month, the administration tells us we need to spend \$10 billion to \$15 billion on the war in Iraq. The protests from the other side of the aisle are few, if any,

to this President's plan to spend \$12 billion to \$15 billion a month in Iraq.

Now comes this bill. This bill suggests spending money in America. What do we hear? A chorus of complaints from the other side of the aisle that it is wasteful—wasteful—to be spending money in America, projects that are new Federal programs, questioning whether there is wisdom behind them, whether taxpayers' dollars should be spent.

The American people should be the judge. Should we be spending American taxpayers' dollars to establish a national registry for those suffering from Lou Gehrig's disease in the hopes we might learn something that leads to a cure? Obviously, the House of Representatives felt it was. That rollcall was 411 to 3. But there is objection on the Republican side of the aisle: a new program.

Then there is the Christopher and Dana Reeve Paralysis Act, calling on the National Institutes of Health for paralysis research and rehab activities, a new program, I will admit it. But if it was a member of my family stuck in a wheelchair, quadriplegic, you can bet I would be begging for this bill. How did it do in the House of Representatives? It passed unanimously, but it is held up on the Republican side of the aisle because it is money spent in America for a new program.

Here is another. Stroke Treatment and Ongoing Prevention Act, a bipartisan bill. Senator KENNEDY, fighting brain cancer in Massachusetts, cannot be here to stand and speak for it. I will speak for it. He and Senator COCHRAN, a Republican from Mississippi, believe this is money well spent on stroke treatment in America. It is another new program, and it is here for America. It is opposed by the Republican side of the aisle.

Why? Why do they want to stop these programs that help us here at home? The list goes on and on. Postpartum depression. I joined Congressman BOBBY RUSH in pushing this one when a lady, a few days after giving birth in Chicago, dove out a hospital window, killing herself—suicide. We don't want that to happen. This bill tries to help mothers struggle through postpartum depression.

Vision care for kids—more money to be spent in the United States. It is opposed by those who are putting a hold on these bills.

All these bills overwhelmingly passed the House of Representatives without any bipartisan rancor, until they got over here. Many of the same Senators who have voted for a blank check to send money to Iraq month after month do not want to spend money in America. I think a strong America begins at home. It begins with good health care. It begins when we care about our own people first.

Then there are the Judiciary Committee bills. The Senator from Oklahoma is a member of the Judiciary Committee. Every one of these bills he

had a chance to amend in the committee. Every one of these bills came out of committee by unanimous vote, which would include his vote. Now he is objecting to moving forward on the floor.

He does not want us to pass the Reconnecting Homeless Youth Act to authorize an increase in authorization levels for runaway kids or the Emmett Till Unsolved Civil Rights Crime Act to try to finally bring to justice those guilty of killing a lot of the great people in America who have been victims of civil rights crimes.

The Mentally Ill Offender Treatment and Crime Reduction Act. Mental illness is such an integral part of many criminal acts. We want to do something about it. It passed unanimously out of the committee, but it is money spent in America, and they object to it. They object to this money being spent. Why?

Effective Child Pornography Prosecution Act. Who favors that? No one favors that. Why won't we spend a few dollars to stop it? You know what is going on in the Internet. How did that bill do? It passed the House of Representatives 409 to 0. There were no breakdowns. Democrats and Republicans all agreed we have to stop this scourge, until it came over here and was stopped by the Senator from Oklahoma. I don't understand his thinking on all this. Let me make one thing clear. These are authorization bills. They do not spend money. They authorize us to spend money, but that authorization has to be followed up with actual spending, and we are limited in the total amount we can spend. If we want to put money into these programs, it has to be taken from other programs.

Many of the same Senators who vote month after month to send money to Iraq, many of the same Senators who voted for tax breaks for the wealthiest people in America in the midst of a war, are saying we cannot afford this money for medical research and money to make America safer. That is what this vote is all about.

I reserve the remainder of my time.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I yield 1 minute to Senator DEMINT, Senator SESSIONS, and Senator BURR, in that order.

Mr. DEMINT. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Oklahoma. I wish to publicly thank him for taking the time to read so many bills and to look at spending and to see if we can do something to curb wasteful spending.

I am disturbed that the Senator from Illinois thinks because we have to spend money in the battle against terror around the world that means we have to spend more at home without looking at real priorities, such as gas prices and dealing with those issues.

I wish to ask the Senator from Oklahoma a question because he has already mentioned it. I saw today that

under the Democratic leadership, even though in their last campaign they were going to be fiscally responsible, I saw in USA Today that we will have the largest deficit in our history next year, and that doesn't even include the \$100 billion we are borrowing from Social Security.

Yet in the middle of this energy debate and how to get gas prices down, I was amazed we were coming back today on bills that were just gathered together—

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

Mr. DEMINT. Mr. President, I ask for 30 more seconds to finish the question—15 more seconds.

I wish to ask the Senator from Oklahoma, is it not true that all these bills were attempted to pass without any debate and without any vote and that the Senator from Oklahoma was asking questions and asking for some kind of openness on the floor? Instead of giving the Senator that, they balled them all up together?

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, the answer to that question is everyone who has a bill in this, outside the nine that have never been hotlined or approved in the past, every one has been offered amendments to offset spending out of the duplication of waste that is already going on.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, in Senator COBURN, we have one of the smartest Members of this Senate and I believe the hardest working. There is no one more principled. It is perfectly all right in this body to object to a bill if it has some impact on your special interest in your State, but when a Senator such as Senator COBURN stands and objects to a piece of legislation because it is bad policy or impacts our national debt, that is not considered appropriate around here.

He has the quaint idea that you should actually read the bill. He and his staff read hundreds of bills. They let them go if they think they are OK. They object to the particular parts they think are bad. They ask for amendments to improve those bills. And then when asked, if they do not accept Senator COBURN's suggestion, he simply says bring up the bill and let me offer my amendment. That is not good enough. They want unanimous consent to run hundreds of bills through in the dead of night, without anybody looking at them, and I am glad one person has the courage and the integrity and the spine to stand and object. He is the one who is for good Government, in my view, and not the crowd who wants to run things through without full debate.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, let me, in full disclosure, say I am supportive of some of these bills. I am actually a co-sponsor of some of these bills. But let

me tell my colleagues what we are asked to do today.

A vote for this cloture motion would be a vote to stop consideration of energy legislation. A vote for this initiative would be a vote to stop considering lower gas prices. A vote for this cloture motion would be a vote to muzzle—muzzle—a Member of the Senate. If that happened, it would also be a vote to muzzle the American people.

It is absolutely essential that this body get back on the debate on energy, where real solutions are presented in the form of amendments and we can address the most important issue to the American people and that is the price of gasoline and an energy policy that is desperately needed in this country.

I yield the floor.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, how much time is remaining?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. There is 3 minutes remaining.

Mr. COBURN. And for Senator DURBIN?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Illinois has 31 seconds.

Mr. COBURN. Let me ask that again. The time remaining for me is 31 seconds?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Oklahoma now has 2 minutes 45 seconds. The Senator from Illinois has 31 seconds.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I will finish and end. First of all, the actual facts are that we are spending in Iraq \$8 billion a month. It is not \$10 billion to \$15 billion; it is \$8 billion.

No. 2, I am not holding four of the eight Judiciary bills in this bill. As a matter of fact, I already agreed to three of them by unanimous consent, and they have gone through this body already. We can play with the facts all we want. The fact is, what is the priority for the American people? I wish to help people who are paralyzed. I have been a supporter of the Emmett Till bill. I think we ought to pay for it. We spent \$396 million for conferences in the Justice Department for the last 5 years. Why would we not take some of that money and pay for it? No, that is hard work. We would not do the oversight. We would not get rid of the wasteful spending. What we will do is pass new spending. That is what has to change.

What my colleagues want to do I am not necessarily objecting to. What I am objecting to is how they want to do it. I am objecting to doing something in the name of good today that undermines the name of good tomorrow, which is the future availability and potential for the children who come our way.

We can have disputes about the war. I have not voted to fund the war, not once. What I have voted for is transparency and elimination of waste, and I brought up amendments. The sponsors of this bill, every one of them voted for the bridge to nowhere; every

one of them voted for the Hippy Museum in New York instead of the Child Health Program. Every one of them voted to, in fact, vote for sidewalk and bike trails instead of fixing the falling down bridges in this country.

The question is, When will we have people who will vote for the future? It is easy to spend money up here. It is very easy to do. And because we are on different sides of the debate doesn't mean those who want to do this are wrong. What is wrong is, in fact, creating a situation where we are going to charge it to our children.

There are options. Senator REID was offered a list of amendments to offset at the Justice Department for the Emmett Till bill, and so was Senator DODD. They refused to even consider offsetting any wasteful spending.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CARDIN). The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. COBURN. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The assistant majority leader.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, we are not leaving the Energy bill. Senator REID, the Democratic leader, offered the Republicans to return to that bill immediately. This isn't going to take 60 hours, unless the Republican side decides to drag it out forever. It doesn't have to. It can take a much shorter period of time.

The bottom line is still this: Are we ready to spend money here in America to solve some of our own problems or are we going to keep shipping this money overseas to rebuild an Iraqi economy that already has more oil than most nations on Earth? Why don't we spend money here for medical research, making it safer for our kids to go on the Internet, or trying to find runaway children?

I think investments in America make us stronger, and that is what this vote will be all about. Those who make the argument to vote against it are voting against investment in America.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have offered a consent request to keep the Energy bill pending regardless if the Senate adopted a motion to proceed to S. 3297, the so-called Coburn package. I made this request so the speculation bill would not be displaced by the Senate acting on S. 3297, the Energy bill.

To clarify for those listening, an objection was raised to my request to keep the Energy bill as the pending business. Anyone voting against this because of not being able to stay on Energy is mistaken or—well, I won't use the word. That is good enough.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, and pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The 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, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 894, S. 3297, the Advancing America's Priorities Act.

Harry Reid, Jon Tester, Carl Levin, Christopher J. Dodd, Maria Cantwell, Benjamin L. Cardin, Daniel K. Inouye, Hillary Rodham Clinton, Kent Conrad, Bernard Sanders, Patty Murray, Debbie Stabenow, Ron Wyden, Patrick J. Leahy, Max Baucus, Dianne Feinstein, Richard Durbin, Robert Menendez, Sherrod Brown.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent if my friends on the other side would waive the live quorum so we could save the Senate 20 minutes of time.

Mr. COBURN. I am told by the staff that we cannot waive that.

Mr. REID. You mean you don't want to. So let's go at it.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll, and the following Senators entered the Chamber and answered to their names:

[Quorum No. 3 Leg.]

Boxer	Coburn	Kyl
Bunning	DeMint	Reid
Burr	Durbin	Roberts
Cardin	Gregg	Webb

The PRESIDING OFFICER. A quorum is not present.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move that the Sergeant at Arms be directed to request the attendance of absent Senators, and I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the motion. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. INOUE), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY), and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. OBAMA) are necessarily absent.

Mr. KYL. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Colorado (Mr. ALLARD), the Senator from North Carolina (Mrs. DOLE), the Senator from Nevada (Mr. ENSIGN), the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. HAGEL), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN), the Senator from New Hampshire (Mr. SUNUNU), and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. VOINOVICH).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 87, nays 3, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 188 Leg.]

YEAS—87

Akaka	Byrd	Cornyn
Alexander	Cantwell	Craig
Barrasso	Cardin	Crapo
Baucus	Carper	DeMint
Bayh	Casey	Dodd
Biden	Chambliss	Domenici
Bingaman	Clinton	Dorgan
Bond	Coburn	Durbin
Boxer	Cochran	Enzi
Brown	Coleman	Feingold
Brownback	Collins	Feinstein
Bunning	Conrad	Graham
Burr	Corker	Grassley

Gregg	Lincoln	Salazar
Harkin	Lugar	Sanders
Hatch	Martinez	Schumer
Hutchison	McCaskill	Sessions
Inhofe	McConnell	Shelby
Isakson	Menendez	Smith
Johnson	Mikulski	Snowe
Kerry	Murkowski	Stabenow
Klobuchar	Murray	Stevens
Kohl	Nelson (FL)	Tester
Kyl	Nelson (NE)	Thune
Landrieu	Pryor	Warner
Lautenberg	Reed	Webb
Leahy	Reid	Whitehouse
Levin	Roberts	Wicker
Lieberman	Rockefeller	Wyden

NAYS—3

Bennett	Specter	Vitter
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NOT VOTING—10

Allard	Inouye	Sununu
Dole	Kennedy	Voinovich
Ensign	McCain	
Hagel	Obama	

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. A quorum is present.

The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I will use leader time.

The next matter is the Coburn package. It does not cost a penny. It is all authorization, dealing with some of the most sensitive issues in this country; for example, the Lou Gehrig's disease. It establishes a registry. Scientists say we cannot make any progress on that dread disease until a registry is established so scientists can take a look at what is going on in Oregon, Florida, Connecticut, and have a registry to go to work on this. That is only one.

It deals with child pornography. It deals with paralysis. It deals with strokes. This is an important piece of legislation. I say to all my friends on the other side of the aisle, I have offered a consent agreement that this will not take us off oil, off energy. That was objected to this morning.

You cannot vote against this legislation because it would take us off energy. You cannot vote against it because it will run up the debt because that is simply untrue.

I hope people will vote for this package. I say to everyone over here, this is it. Everyone knows how little time we have left to accomplish everything we need to do. You can all go home and explain to your constituents, if you vote against this legislation, how you refused to move forward on some of the most sensitive issues that are in our legislative portfolio in Congress today. We will not be able to take these matters up at a later time, and we will have to wait until a new Congress. In the meantime there will be much suffering and mental distress as a result of not moving forward on these matters.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader is recognized.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I am going to take a minute or so of my leader time.

The issue before us, I say to my colleagues, is whether we are going to stay on the Energy bill. I have some optimism based on a conversation I had with the majority leader on the Senate

floor earlier this afternoon that we might be able to come up with an agreement to go forward. This is not the time to go off of the No. 1 issue in this country. On every poll you have seen the American people expect us to deal with the energy problem and to deal with it now.

With all due respect to any other matters that might be pending that all of us have an interest in, the question is, what is the most important thing to do in the Senate this week, right now, and it is to stay on energy.

I would urge my friends on this side to oppose cloture. We will get back to this issue later. Let's stay on energy, finish the job, and deal with the No. 1 issue before the American people.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, as I said earlier, folks, there will not be another time. This is it.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 3268

I ask unanimous consent that S. 3268, the speculation energy bill, that they all want to stay on, remain the pending business notwithstanding the adoption of the motion to proceed to a nonprivileged item, namely the Coburn package.

How much more clear could we be?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I will be constrained to object because, as a practical matter, if we move to that issue, we will be off of the subject indefinitely because of concerns over here about this particular measure. We will be on it indefinitely. We will probably never get back to the No. 1 issue that is before us. So under these particular circumstances, I am constrained to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. REID. We would be off this as long as it would take to adopt the motion to proceed, which would take 15 minutes for the vote. Then we could move immediately to the bill. We could do that immediately. We could finish it quickly. The only effort that my friend, the distinguished junior Senator from Oklahoma, wants is to throw a monkey wrench into proceedings around here. That is what this is all about.

I do not know why people on the other side of the aisle would join in this. You go home and explain to your constituents about Lou Gehrig's disease. You go home and explain about the stroke legislation. You go home and explain to your folks about the Emmitt Till legislation. You go home and explain to everyone there about the paralysis bill.

Next time you see someone in a wheelchair at home, explain to them how you voted against moving forward on something that may get them out of that wheelchair.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I am confident—I see my friend from Oklahoma on the Senate floor. Maybe he would like to ask me a question.

Mr. CORNYN. If I might through the Chair, under the rules of the Senate, I

would be entitled to 30 hours of debate postcloture on the motion to proceed.

Mr. MCCONNELL. That is my understanding.

Mr. COBURN. Should we go past that to a cloture motion, I would be entitled to 30 hours of debate. If you add these, 60 hours of debate, unless we debate all night long every night, would that, in fact, take us past the time, the expected time of adjournment?

Mr. MCCONNELL. Reclaiming my time, I think the answer to my friend's question is, that is where we would be. Thus my observation that if we want to deal with the No. 1 issue in the country in the last week we are expected to be here, the appropriate thing to do is to stay on the subject.

Obviously, my friend from Oklahoma feels very strongly about this matter. He and the majority leader are likely to have this exchange again sometime down the road. The question for all of us is, what is the most essential thing to do for America right now?

The American people are asking us to do something about the price of gas at the pump. The way to do that is to stay on that subject at this particular moment, and the way to do that is to vote against cloture on getting off the subject and going to something else.

Mr. REID. With all due respect to my doctor friend from Oklahoma, his math is not very good. The 30 hours, if he would want to take the 30 hours, which appears to be a little outlandish—but that would not be the first go-round we have had with outlandish stuff around here—that would run out sometime tomorrow. The cloture vote would be sometime on Thursday.

No one says we have to leave on Friday. No one says we have to leave until we complete our work. So I would say to my friends, do not take the bait.

First of all, we would be on energy. The Senator from Oklahoma can stall this out, and we know he is entitled to 30 hours after today and 30 hours when we invoke cloture on the bill itself because cloture would be invoked on it if people had a right to vote on that.

But do not take that bait. I say to everyone here, you go home and explain to someone, like I did, like I am going to have to do—Cathy Barrett from Sparks, NV, has Lou Gehrig's disease. She is going to die. The average time from finding out you have the disease until you die is 18 months. Go home and explain to her and her family. And there are 6,000 new cases every year. Lou Gehrig's disease, that is what it is all about.

As I said before, you go and see someone in a wheelchair, and you tell them: I had the chance to do something about that, but I decided we would wait until next year. A year is not so important. You are only in a wheelchair for a limited period of time—perhaps your life.

I think you should also go home and explain to every parent who is concerned about Internet pornography—people who thrive on doing things on the Internet to be in the position to abuse children, that is in this bill too.

I think we should be concerned about an issue that every time you go home—and most everywhere in America has an African-American community. You see someone in that African-American community, you tell them: I did not vote for the Emmitt Till legislation. It was not important enough because I had other things I wanted to do.

So every time you go back to your constituents, African-American constituents, wherever it may be in this country, you tell them: I wanted to get out of Washington; I did not have time to do that.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, the majority leader just made a very strong argument for why this issue he is talking about should not be put off until next year. But the issue before us now is what to do immediately. We have been on the issue of energy for a week. It is time to stay on it and finish the job.

The majority leader, not the minority, determines what the schedule is. If the so-called Coburn bill is so important, I am sure the majority leader will turn back to it soon. But the issue is staying on the No. 1 concern in the country now and finishing the job. The majority leader, who controls the schedule, has it perfectly within his power not to delay this bill until later. In fact, this bill could have been done sooner than now—sooner than now. The issue today is whether we stay on the No. 1 issue in the country and finish the job. I recommend that we do that.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I hope the RECORD does not show a grin on my face because there is not one. But I think the statement just made by the Republican leader: I could have gone to this earlier had I wanted to—we have had 90 filibusters, breaking all previous records, breaking all previous records of a Congress from the time we were a country until today. I could have moved to it earlier?

For the last 18 months since we have been in the majority, which I know has caused the Republicans to be in a snit, we have had to file cloture on virtually everything to work around procedural hurdles. So this is all part of the game. And I am disappointed that my Republican colleagues are buying the line of big oil.

We have offered, on many occasions, a vote on their drilling amendment. We did it again earlier today. I hope we can work something out on it. But please do not use that as an excuse to vote against these packages.

I say, and I repeat again, for the 34 different reasons—the 34 different bills in this package being held up for no good reason—it does not affect the debt at all. We have in the RECORD a letter from the head of the Congressional Budget Office that says it has no bearing on the deficit.

I would hope that because of our African-American communities, people who have Lou Gehrig's disease, people who are paralyzed, people who are con-

cerned about pornography, you will vote for this.

Now, my friend casually says: Well, the Democratic leader will move to this some other time.

There are very few other times left in this Congress. We are going to get out of here in the next week or 10 days, I hope. We then come back in September where we have a few—literally, a few days. There is very little time. So as it happened with LIHEAP, you folks walked right off the cliff last week. You are going to have to go home and explain to the poor, the disabled, and the old people why you voted against LIHEAP because I do not know when we are going to be able to move to it again. I would like to, but I do not know when we can do that again.

I ask for a vote now.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Let me say briefly, my good friend is making a campaign speech about who is going to pay a price for this or that or the other. I do not think the American people are particularly interested in that.

What we know they are interested in, all the surveys indicate what they are interested in, is seeing the Congress work together to do something important about the No. 1 issue in the country, and that is the price of gas at the pump.

We have a chance, if we stay on the subject—I am optimistic that we are going to have some amendments that are agreeable to both sides. We can move forward. The majority leader, who is in charge of the schedule, can get us back on any subject he chooses at any time of his choosing. So I would hope our colleagues would vote to stay on the subject of lowering the price of gas at the pump for the American people.

Mr. REID. Every Senator, all 100 of us, are experienced politicians. And for the Republican leader to say there is no price to be paid for what they have been doing: not allowing LIHEAP to go forward, and now, in effect, killing 34 different bills that should have passed like that you do not think there is a price to be paid for it come November 4? The American people will decide that.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate to proceed to S. 3297, a bill to Advance America's Priorities, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) and the Senator from Illinois (Mr. OBAMA) are necessarily absent.

Mr. KYL. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Colorado (Mr. ALLARD), the Senator from North Carolina (Mrs. DOLE), the Senator from Nevada (Mr. ENSIGN), the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. HAGEL), the Senator from Arizona (Mr.

MCCAIN), and the Senator from New Hampshire (Mr. SUNUNU).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 52, nays 40, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 189 Leg.]

YEAS—52

Akaka	Feingold	Nelson (FL)
Baucus	Feinstein	Nelson (NE)
Bayh	Harkin	Pryor
Biden	Inouye	Reed
Bingaman	Johnson	Reid
Boxer	Kerry	Rockefeller
Brown	Klobuchar	Salazar
Byrd	Kohl	Sanders
Cantwell	Landrieu	Schumer
Cardin	Lautenberg	Smith
Carper	Leahy	Stabenow
Casey	Levin	Tester
Clinton	Lieberman	Warner
Coleman	Lincoln	Webb
Conrad	McCaskill	Whitehouse
Dodd	Menendez	Wyden
Dorgan	Mikulski	
Durbin	Murray	

NAYS—40

Alexander	Crapo	McConnell
Barrasso	DeMint	Murkowski
Bennett	Domenici	Roberts
Bond	Enzi	Sessions
Brownback	Graham	Shelby
Bunning	Grassley	Snowe
Burr	Gregg	Specter
Chambliss	Hatch	Stevens
Coburn	Hutchison	Thune
Cochran	Inhofe	Vitter
Collins	Isakson	Voivovich
Corker	Kyl	Wicker
Conryn	Lugar	
Craig	Martinez	

NOT VOTING—8

Allard	Hagel	Obama
Dole	Kennedy	Sununu
Ensign	McCain	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote the yeas are 52, the nays are 40. Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn not having voted in affirmative, the motion is rejected.

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. STABENOW). The clerk will call the roll. The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

Mr. BAUCUS. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The legislative clerk continued with the call of the roll.

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

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

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I apologize to everyone for the quorum lasting for so long, but there are certain things I have trouble getting to. Sometimes I need a little downtime to meet with staff, and there are a number of times I don't have an opportunity to do that, and meet with a number of Senators. So I apologize to everyone for not allowing the quorum to be called off. I do that very rarely, but I thought it was appropriate today.

I have a number of things I want to do and I will do that now.

Mr. President, I withdraw the motion to proceed to S. 3297.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion is withdrawn.

FREE FLOW OF INFORMATION ACT OF 2007—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 434, S. 2035, the Free Flow of Information Act—this is the media shield bill—and I send a cloture motion to the desk. In fact, it is at the desk.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The 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, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 434, S. 2035, the Free Flow of Information Act.

Harry Reid, Charles E. Schumer, Debbie Stabenow, Christopher J. Dodd, Maria Cantwell, Richard Durbin, Barbara A. Mikulski, Frank R. Lautenberg, Bernard Sanders, Robert Menendez, Patty Murray, Barbara Boxer, Ron Wyden, Ken Salazar, Bill Nelson, Daniel K. Inouye, Amy Klobuchar.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I now withdraw the motion to proceed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion is withdrawn.

JOBS, ENERGY, FAMILIES, AND DISASTER RELIEF ACT OF 2008—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to proceed to Calendar No. 898, S. 3335, the energy extenders package, and I ask that the clerk report the cloture motion at the desk.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The bill 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, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 898, S. 3335, the Jobs, Energy, Families, and Disaster Relief Act of 2008.

Harry Reid, Max Baucus, Bernard Sanders, Christopher J. Dodd, Maria Cantwell, Benjamin L. Cardin, Daniel K. Inouye, Hillary Rodham Clinton, Patty Murray, Ron Wyden, Debbie Stabenow, Patrick J. Leahy, Dianne Feinstein, Richard Durbin, Robert Menendez, Sherrod Brown, Carl Levin.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, the junior Senator from Oklahoma has a matter he wishes to bring before the Senate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. COBURN. I thank the majority leader for the time.

Mr. President, in the bills we did not agree to go to, I have worked with Senator BIDEN on the child exploitation alternative bill, which would protect our children from pornography and Internet exploitation. That bill is at the desk and has been filed.

After working with Senator BIDEN, adding the SAFE Act, which is an act that would decrease the amount of graphic and vile images of child pornography currently available on the Internet and help root out people selling, trading, and displaying images, and by expanding the requirements for the Internet service providers to report on online child pornography, which is a bipartisan bill as well, as were two of these components I never held in the bill, I ask unanimous consent that we call up and pass that bill, as amended, with the concurrence of the majority leader.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, what we have here is one of the most blatant attempts to get a cover for a vote the Republicans can't justify. The Republicans just voted against the bill that had these child pornography and child exploitation provisions in it. A few minutes ago, we had a cloture vote on the motion to begin debate on that bill. The Republicans overwhelmingly voted against it. We got three Republicans to vote for it, each of those running for reelection.

Because they feel bad about siding with big oil over important American priorities, they now want to have it both ways. Here is who they voted against: They voted against Americans with Lou Gehrig disease, they voted against American mothers who suffer from postpartum depression, they voted against justice for people murdered during the civil rights struggle, they voted against expanding programs to keep kids off drugs, they voted against Americans who want to be sure kids are safe when they visit America's beaches and swim in the oceans, and a bill including numerous other important provisions—dealing with strokes, with paralysis. If a Member of my party, a Member of my caucus forced me to vote against so many important priorities based on specious and misleading arguments, I would want a way out too.

So what we have here is a consent agreement, a consent request, I should say, that is about providing cover, not about trying to enact this legislation. To bring up Senator BIDEN's name is, at the very least, unfair, disingenuous. Senator COBURN didn't even bother to talk to the offices whose bills are cobbled together in his unanimous consent request. And in fact he didn't even bother to attend a hearing on this issue the Judiciary Committee held in April.