

ALTERNATIVE ENERGY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, I enjoyed listening to my colleague from Illinois. In fact, this is the second time today I have heard him speak on the floor and I have seen him point to the picture of the coal miners and talk about the problems of the Clean Air Act. And I hope every American was listening to that because that is exactly what we are talking about today.

We had, for decades, people burning dirty coal, turning rivers and lakes in other parts of the country, acid rain, destroying forests, posing problems to people's health. And what this Congress did, in a bipartisan effort, was create a mechanism to make it so that it was no longer free to pollute the air with dirty coal that created acid rain and destroyed lakes and forests.

My friend didn't want to talk about the problems to health, didn't want to talk about the issues that relate to the damage to the environment, or the fact that we were able to create the most effective market system in history that was able to solve a real problem to the environment, to health. Life went on. Yes, there were some changes in terms of the economy. There were some people who didn't—when it became too expensive for them to foul the air, spoil our lakes, and destroy our forests, then they shifted. Well, I would suggest, Madam Speaker, that any independent observer would suggest that that was a solid program and a good tradeoff.

I don't hear my friend from Illinois coming to the floor and saying, repeal the Clean Air Act so we can have a few more miners at work creating dirty coal that is going to ruin our environment and destroy health. That issue is over.

We are facing a very real challenge today about what we are going to do to protect the future of the planet. I will get into, in a moment, talking about some of the discussion that we have heard from our friends on the other side of the aisle, but one of the things that is very, very important to note is that they have no answer in terms of what we do to the slow cooking of the planet. They ignore the costs that are being incurred right this minute. Temperatures in Alaska have already gone up several degrees, permafrost is no longer permanent, roads are buckling, coastal villages washed away. These are costs and consequences that we are already seeing as the ocean levels slowly, imperceptibly to most of us, but very clear to scientists when they see the fabled Inland Passage in the Arctic Ocean free of ice, when we watch the habitat shrink for arctic animals, when we watch diseases shifting from vector control—West Nile disease, for instance, popping up in places where it shouldn't be, where invasive species are

infesting our forests. These are costs and consequences that we are seeing now that my friends on the other side of the aisle refuse to come to grips with.

But we are not going to be able to have the same head-in-the-sand attitude that we saw from the Bush administration alone—of all the major governments in the world, alone—denying the imperative of global warming, withdrawing from opportunities to be collaborative on a national scale.

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What we had to have in the last 8 years, where the other side of the aisle simply accepted that sort of behavior from their administration and, in fact, aided and abetted and supported it, we had over 900 cities across the country come forward and say wait a minute, we're not going to wait for the Bush administration and the Federal Government. We are going to take it upon ourselves to deal with climate change and global warming and move to change our local economy, to prepare it for the future, and to help slow this damage to the environment by carbon pollution.

I come from a community in Portland, Oregon, where we have actually reduced greenhouse gas emissions for 4 years in a row. We're very close to being Kyoto compliant. It gave us an opportunity, frankly, to create new green jobs. We were competing with Houston and Denver for being the wind energy capital of the United States because we've been serious about energy conservation, transportation choices, land use, all of the things that are going to be part of a comprehensive solution to the threat of these changes to the climate and the carbon pollution. We've actually been able to make some progress and be positioned to deal with a carbon-constrained economy.

We need, Madam Speaker, for people to reflect on what is happening now. Just like my friend from Illinois didn't talk about the cost of acid rain. It didn't matter to him. He was concerned about a few miners in his district and didn't care about the damage to forests and human health and lakes and fishing. But we are already seeing the damage that is occurring as a result of climate change.

Speaking of acid rain, one of the things we are seeing is that the ocean is slowly becoming more and more acidic. This increased acidic content of the ocean is having a consequence in terms of damaging coral reefs. I mean these are the rain forests of the ocean. This is where billions and billions of different animals and plants reside up the food chain throughout the ecological system of the ocean that makes a difference in terms of how people on this planet are going to be fed. We are watching what has happened. There may be consequences in terms of the Earth's climate because of the change in the ocean's current and acidic level.

We are seeing across the country increases in extreme weather events, ex-

actly what the scientists told us would happen. Yes, the world's atmosphere is increasing in temperature. Yes, we're seeing an increase in the sea level that could be 2 to 6 feet by the end of the next century. But we are already seeing vast stretches of this country in the flame zone being subjected to increased forest fires, to drought. In your areas in the Southeast, you have seen drought where it has not been a problem for years. In the Southwest, Lake Mead that supplies the city of Las Vegas is going down, causing massive disruption. We are watching changes that are taking place in terms of snowpack. My good friend and colleague from the Pacific Northwest, Mr. INSLEE, and I depend on snowpack for water supply and energy production. This makes a great deal of difference.

Madam Speaker, one of the concerns I have as I am listening to our friends on the other side of the aisle make things up about what is going to happen with a proposal to reduce carbon pollution and put a price on it, they assume somehow that this is going to result in money disappearing, that somehow this is just a tax that goes into the great government maw and there is nothing that comes out the other end. Well, as a practical matter, and I'm confident that in the course of this hour as I work with my friend Mr. INSLEE, who I see poised here in the front of the Chamber and I am hoping that he's willing to enter into this conversation with me because he knows a great deal about it, we hope that we will be able to encourage, if not our Republican friends, at least the American people to look at the President's budget. Look at what he has proposed to begin a comprehensive approach to transform our energy supply and slow global warming.

Yes, he recommends putting a price on carbon pollution, but he also recommends that this money would be generated by having the carbon polluters pay for the privilege, just like we did with acid rain so successfully that my friend from Illinois now is against. There are opportunities to be able to put this back into place because the program, and I'm just quoting from the President's budget, would be implemented through a cap and trade, like we did with acid rain, that will ensure that the biggest polluters don't enjoy a windfall. The program will fund vital investments in a clean energy future, which I think my friend Mr. INSLEE may have some thoughts about, \$150 billion over the course of the next 10 years. The balance of the auction revenues are to be returned to the people, especially vulnerable families, communities, and business, to help the transition to the clean energy economy.

You know, there's a great NRDC blog that talks about Newt Gingrich's assertion that climate change will result in a \$1,300 tax per household. And they point out it's simply voodoo economics.

First of all, he ignores the value of the carbon market. It just disappears.

He assumes that the money doesn't get returned to the taxpayers. Well, based on what New Gingrich and the Republicans did with their bridges to nowhere, with their profligate spending in Iraq, with their driving up the budget deficits and giving benefits to a few taxpayers at the expense of the many, I can understand the skepticism. He assumes that it won't be invested in energy conservation, saving us money. He assumes that communities aren't being helped. He assumes that it's not going to address regional differences in the cost of cutting global warming. He just assumes that somehow it's locked up someplace in a vault. Well, that's wrong. The President has outlined an approach that captures the value and makes America stronger, more energy reliant, and allows families the tools to reduce their escalating energy costs.

And I will conclude on this point and then yield to my colleague from Washington State if he's interested in joining in. But I want to say that we are facing now the consequences of an energy policy that was designed looking in a rear-view mirror for failed fossil fuels, lack of energy conservation, and not dealing with the technologies of the future. And as a result, energy bills are going up. As a result, we saw \$4.11 a gallon gasoline last summer. We saw \$700 billion leave this country to petroleum potentates when there's a different vision of the President and of those of us who want to do something not just about global warming but to retool and revitalize our green economy.

And with that I would like to yield to my colleague Mr. INSLEE, who's an author in this arena, a noted spokesperson who has been working for years in Congress before, as they say, it was fashionable, to talk about how our economy and our environment could look different.

Congressman INSLEE, welcome.

Mr. INSLEE. I appreciate, Mr. BLUMENAUER, coming forth to talk about this issue because we're about to really make a pretty big decision here, whether we're going to just continue doing nothing about our energy problems, this sort of inaction model. Some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle basically are saying everything is hunky-dory and we should do nothing about the energy challenges we have. Or should we take a real step forward to try to move to transform our economy, to build millions of green collar jobs, to wean ourselves off of Middle Eastern oil and at the same time reduce the amount of global warming that is occurring?

We think we need to move. We think we need action. We don't think the current state of the economy is good enough for America. We think America is better than this for ways I'd like to talk about a little bit. And I don't think it's good enough to adopt this sort of approach some of my colleagues earlier were talking about to just say it's okay to be addicted to Middle East-

ern oil, it's okay to allow the jobs of building electric cars to go to China.

It's not okay to let the jobs building wind turbines to go to Denmark. It's not okay to let the job of building solar cells go to China. We don't think that's okay. We want an American response to build those products here, to build those green collar jobs here.

Now, I meet with a lot of groups about energy. I was very heartened last weekend. I went to the Boston area to go to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the MIT Conference on Energy, and there's a group up at MIT of students, mostly post-graduate science and engineering students, and they have an energy club, and once a year they have a meeting about energy. So I went up there to address their group. There were about 150, 200 students, and about 300 entrepreneurs and business people. And I was so excited to listen to what they saw as a vision for this country.

And for those who think we can just stay in the status quo, I wish they could meet these MIT students. These folks were telling me about the jobs we can create in the solar industry with concentrated solar energy power, like the Ausra Company that just built the first manufacturing plant for concentrated solar cell energy in Nevada. Just 2 months ago they opened up this plant. And these MIT students are chomping at the bit to start working in that technology. We were talking about the AltaRock Company, a company that's now exploring engineered geothermal up in the State of Washington. These MIT students just can't wait to start going out and start businesses around technology like that. We talked about the Sapphire Energy Company, a company that now is building production facilities to use algae to make biofuels. We talked about the A123 Company in Boston, which makes lithium-ion batteries so we can power our plug-in electric hybrid cars.

And what these MIT students told me is, Mr. Congressman, you build a structure to drive investment into these new technologies, and we will build the companies of the future and the jobs of the future to deliver a clean energy transformed economy for the United States.

And for anybody who is a pessimist about our ability to wean ourselves off of fossil fuel and wean ourselves off of Saudi Arabian oil, you ought to go out and meet these MIT students.

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But the businessmen there told us something, and this is the important point, I think. What the business people, these were venture capitalists, these were CEOs of major corporations, what they told us is that future will not come to pass, the green-collar jobs we are talking about, unless we adopt some rules of the road for a market-based economy that will not give such an advantage to fossil fuels but, in fact, will level the playing field.

And what they told me is that basically there is a couple of things we can do. One thing we can do is to essentially level the playing field between these new technologies and some of the older companies that have been subsidized for so long, like the oil and gas industry.

Now, basically, we can do that through a system that will drive investment towards these new jobs of the future. And, by the way, those new jobs of the future may include what we call sequestered coal. Some of my colleagues were here earlier talking a lot about coal. The folks up at MIT were telling me that we may be able to find a technology to sequester carbon dioxide when you gasify coal. It may be a possibility.

So we need some research dollars to make that come to pass. Well, we have a way of doing that, and President Obama has proposed a way of generating funds that can be used to essentially develop that technology, and he has proposed what's called a cap-and-trade or a cap-and-invest system which is, basically, it's pretty simple. We would establish a cap, a limit on the amount of pollution that polluting industries are allowed to put into the air.

We have done this to great success in acid rain, sulfur dioxide, which is the pollution that causes acid rain. Congress several years ago passed a cap, a limit on the amount of that acid rain pollution that we put into the atmosphere.

Now, President Obama has proposed doing the same for the pollutant that causes global warming, principally carbon dioxide. And then we would simply have the polluting industries buy, at auction, the permits to do that, and use the market system to establish a price for that.

Now, here's the important part about this approach. Number 1, it does, it takes action. It recognizes that the status quo is not good enough. And we are here tonight to say that America needs a better energy policy than the one we have right now. So, number one, it takes action.

Number two, when you do this, what the business people have told me all across this country, when you do this, it starts to drive investment into these new technologies that can create the green-collar jobs that we need so much in wind power, in solar power, in enhanced geothermal power, in electric cars and potentially in sequestered coal to use coal in that way. But to do that you have to put a price on carbon dioxide, and you have to limit the amount of this pollution that's going into the atmosphere. So we are here to say that we are capable of building a new transformed economy.

I want to make one other comment if I can, people have said that when you make an investment like this it costs some money. Well, any investment costs some money, when you buy a house, it costs some money. When you build an electric car, it costs you some

money. But the people who want us to just stay in the status quo don't understand that the door of inaction is going to cost us a heck of a lot more money.

Go ask the people up in Alaska whose homes tonight are washing into the Arctic Ocean because the permafrost is melting, these are Americans. There is a town in America that is going to have to be moved at the cost of about \$30 million because it's basically melting into the Arctic Ocean because the tundra is melting underneath them. That's costing Americans a lot of money tonight. We need to figure that into the proposition.

Go ask the farmers in California, who are losing their farms tonight because we have this horrendous drought, an unprecedented drought in the western United States, who are losing their farms and their livelihoods. Ask them if there is a cost associated with global warming.

Ask the folks who are losing salmon, the salmon fishermen on the west coast—I am from Washington, Mr. BLUMENAUER is from Oregon—ask them the cost of inaction of losing their livelihood because we lost salmon runs because there wasn't enough water in the rivers last year to have a salmon harvest.

Americans are getting costs tonight that we cannot ignore, and we know those costs are going to be greater than any investments that we make. By the way, those investments that we make under our plan, here is what is going to happen, and this is President Obama's plan. Polluting industries are going to do what they should do, which is to have to pay some cost to put pollution into the atmosphere.

You know, when you and I go to the dump, we pay \$25 to dump our junk in the garbage dump. We can't just dump it for free. And under our plan polluting industries will pay some cost associated with putting pollution into the atmosphere, as determined by the market. They will bid against each other, and the highest bidder will get the permit.

So they will get to finally recognize the atmosphere as not a personal dumping ground for a coal-fired plant but, in fact, something we share that has a market value. So they will put money into the pot to buy those permits.

That money will then go back to the American people in a variety of ways. First it will go back to the American people in making an investment for America in common to build these new industries to do the research and development it takes so these jobs will be here, not China. It will go back to the American people as an investment to build research facilities to build lithium ion batteries here in this country rather than China and Korea, that's number 1.

Number two, it will go back to the American people in a substantial tax cut, probably the largest tax cut America has seen for the middle class, to

make permanent some of these tax cuts. It's going to go right back to the American people.

Third, it will go back in a way, and there are several ways we can do this, to help some of the communities that might be disadvantaged, potentially, by job loss and energy-intensive industries around steel mills and the like. The point is it will go back to the American people, and it go in a way that will reduce the cost for Americans, not increase it.

Now, if you think I am just making this stuff up, people can go check an authoritative view, an assessment of the cost of this, and it basically concluded as this has net positive costs. I mean, it doesn't have costs relative to what's going to happen to our economy if we do not act, and that's from an assessment done on the GNP that predicted we would have a 5 percent reduction.

Lloyd Stern, a very well respected economist from England, he and his team did this assessment. They concluded we will have net negative costs relative to this inaction.

So we are here to say we have a vision based on confidence that Americans still have the right stuff, that people who put a man on the Moon still have the right stuff. And if we go out and make these investments, we are going to put Americans to work building these green-collar jobs right in this country. If we don't, we are going to lose jobs.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I very much appreciate the perspective you bring to this discussion, and I very much appreciate you referencing the Stern report. This is an opportunity, we both serve on the Speaker's Select Committee for Energy Independence and Global Warming, having a chance to deal with the British Parliament hearing and Sir Nicholas Stern lay out the result of his research.

And by a 5-1 margin, the cost, the risks, the costs that we are looking at were far greater than any cost of implementation, and as you have outlined in great detail, there are many opportunities, if we do this right, to revitalize our economy, to reduce costs right now to American families.

Just four categories of climate damage alone, hurricanes, higher energy bills, property lost to rising sea level and water-supply impacts are predicted to cost the average family \$2,000 a year by 2025; by 2050, that increases another 50 percent to \$3,000 a year; and by the end of the next century, \$11,000 per family, just for those elements.

Now, those estimates ignore, because they are a little hard to quantify, but as you pointed out, they are real. The added cost of drought, flood, wildfires, the mud slides that follow, agricultural damage and the value of lost life. We saw thousands of people lose their lives a few years ago in Europe, in France. We saw hundreds of people die in the Midwest.

These are real problems that our friends on the other side have no an-

swers for. They are, instead, paying—I am stunned that they would come to the floor and argue against.

Mr. INSLEE. I just had a thought, as you were talking. I have seen this movie before of those who didn't want to take action, and I am trying to remember where I saw it before and I just flashed on where it was. It was in Katrina, because if you think about some of my colleagues who don't want to take action to protect against natural disaster, it's kind of like the response of the administration to Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans where they did not make a response to a natural disaster.

And we are now experiencing a natural disaster of enormous implications and costs. What I think this is like is if we had come forward the day before Katrina with meteorological evidence that this hurricane is coming, and we went to President Bush and we said, if we make this investment, we can build these levees real fast and protect this city from this known damage that's coming our way.

You know what our friends across the aisle would have said? Costs too much money. It's just another socialist experiment. And that's pretty much what the administration's attitude was in Katrina even when that was happening.

Now, we have a slow-motion disaster which is a lot worse than Katrina. But their philosophy is the same, which is to not spend a dollar for investment against a known risk. And so I just want to suggest it's a similar situation.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Well, I appreciate your clarification and amplification. It is stunning to hear my friend on the other side of the aisle think that the Clean Air Act failed, and because a few people admittedly lost their jobs mining dirty coal, that somehow it wasn't worth stopping the damage to lakes and forests and human health. We put a price on a pollutant, as you pointed out, sulfur dioxide.

People paid and pretty soon we had reversed the damage and we were cleaning it up. There are costs now that the American public is paying. There are greater, future costs that we can avoid, an opportunity to strengthen America and strengthen our economy.

I see we have been joined by our colleague from Colorado, Congressman POLIS, if you would wish to enter into this dialogue, I know you have been an avid supporter of a strong environment. You come from a community that cares deeply about this, and we would welcome your thoughts and observations if you would care to join us.

Mr. POLIS. Here in Congress, and as a new Member going through the budget process and looking at a lot of these issues for the first time, I am really struck by the fact that as we discuss numbers on the cost side, we are not accounting for the cost of not taking action which, in many cases, particularly with regard to reducing our carbon emissions, are far greater than a

lot of the costs that we are looking at with regard to the actions we need to take.

So a more comprehensive and an integral approach to kind of how we look at costs is absolutely critical here.

You mentioned as well, the Clean Air and Clean Water Act. There are ways, economic ways to put a value, a beyond the moral value of preserving our rivers and preserving our trees. There is a very legitimate moral value, whether you derived that from a faith-based position or another position, there are actual economic costs of our value of our natural heritage and our natural assets. When minerals or oil and gas are extracted, they are extracted once, they are gone.

We are losing a national asset. It's not a renewable energy source. And these are not looked at in terms of coming from the financial calculations with regard to the programs that we are proposing.

So I think it would be some benefit in trying to apply some more integral accounting and economic modeling and budgetary techniques to looking at the real cost of doing nothing and, in fact, the real savings from taking action. When you are taking action to preserve our rivers and streams and forest, for instance, you might look at the direct economic cost of that to businesses, but you also have to look at the natural capital that is preserved, that is a true form of capital wealth for our great country that deserves every bit as much consideration as the direct dollars and cents associated with implementation of these policies.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I very much appreciate your observations. We have been joined by my colleague from New York, Congressman TONKO from Albany who, in a prior life, as I recall, was CEO of the New York State Energy and Research Development Authority. You have got some practical applications, both in your private sector experience and your work for years in the New York State Assembly. We will welcome thoughts and observations that you would have to add to the conversation.

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Mr. TONKO. Thank you, Congressman. I think it's absolutely important that we move forward with progressive policy in the energy area. I chaired the Energy Committee in the New York State Assembly for 15 years. And, you're right, went on to serve as president and CEO at NYSERDA, where we focused on renewables, efficiency, research and development. The investment that we saw was tremendously powerful to the economy and where we worked on several projects that really promoted efficiency and conservation measures.

What I think is important to note here is that this President, this administration, has shared a vision with a laser-sharp focus and shared with a very direct boldness about the opportunity we have now as a Nation.

We have witnessed the last several years of conflicts in the Middle East, and so many believe that was over the commodity of oil. We know that that fossil-based dependency pollutes the environment and that we have an opportunity here to not only address our future and job creation, but our environment and greening up the outcomes, leaving not only this generation, but certainly those to follow much cleaner air to breathe and a stronger sense of environment-friendly policy.

Where I think the significance comes here is that we can grow our energy independence. We can strengthen that outcome by reducing what is a glut-tonous dependency on fossil-based fuels, oftentimes imported and from some of the most troubled spots in the world that have unstable governments. And it's why we were drawn into a conflict, I think, because of our dependency on that area for our energy commodities.

While we can reduce that dependence on fossil-based fuels, we can strengthen our energy security, which is a good thing. It's a great bit of policy initiative that we should have pull us along this roadway of progressive politics as it relates to energy generation and energy usage.

We also, when we reduce that dependency and grow the energy security, we grow and strengthen our national security, which is an important factor in the international concepts. We are able to move forward in a way that I think promotes a much more stable national security outcome for our Nation and generations, again, to follow.

So, as we do this, I believe the investments we can make now by the policies that will build an investment in renewables, in shelf-ready opportunities to grow energy efficient outcomes, to retrofit our businesses, to retrofit our farms. We did projects through NYSERDA that spoke favorably, overwhelmingly favorably, to dairy farmers, who are dealing with perishable products, who are dealing with perishable produce, that were dealing with a very important bit of nature. They couldn't avoid at times the peak periods where they could perhaps avoid priciest power. They needed to have some sort of addressing of those situations.

What we were able to do is retrofit those dairy farms and allow for them to reduce their energy costs, which allows for them to feed this Nation in a more effective way.

So, also, as we create these opportunities through investment and research and development, we are growing significant jobs, tremendous jobs that will call upon the engineer out there, the inventor, the innovator, and we know that there's a great career ladder we can build there.

We are investing in the trades because the trading out and the retrofit of these systems, they will maintain, operate, and repair these situations so

that, again, job creation galore here that can really allow us to breathe freer in terms of creating the energy that we need and how we use that energy.

What I also would make mention of is that R&D, research and development, should be seen as economic development. I believe that by investing in that sort of future, by creating the funds that will allow for a blueprint for our energy future, that allows us to take that intellectual capacity as a Nation, to take our brain power as Americans, and put it to work so that we can deploy these success stories into the commercial sector, where we can do cutting edge, where we already have ready opportunities, they need to be inserted into the outcomes here in the States, and we also can move forward with many, many new opportunities in this energy-driven, innovative economy that is so boldly expressed by this President and certainly by Speaker PELOSI and the leadership of this House.

So I see a great opportunity here for this Nation to respond favorably to the energy needs of this country, to do it much more independent of reliance on some of the most troubled spots in the world, and doing it in a way that creates significant career ladders for people across the strata of job opportunities, from trades on up to those who hold bachelor's and master's and doctorate degrees that can assist this Nation.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. We deeply appreciate your adding a voice of experience as somebody who dealt not just with the policy but the practice to demonstrate how this money somehow doesn't disappear, but is reinvested, creates wealth, creates economic opportunities for a wide variety of people.

Mr. TONKO. Certainly. As we struggle through these very difficult economic times, job creation, job retention is at the forefront of the work we do. We all talk about it every day. This is a good way that not only grows jobs but grows that energy independence and strengthens the energy outcome, and it does it in an environmentally friendly way.

So it's a powerful statement that we can make here as legislators.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I appreciate that very much.

Mr. INSLEE.

Mr. INSLEE. Thank you. I want to continue this discussion of job creation. I want to address—some of our colleagues may be watching tonight, possibly—a couple of industries that are concerned about this. One is the coal industry and one is the auto industry, two great industries doing hard work for a long time. And I want to address how our proposals tonight I believe long term will help those people working in those industries. Not hurt them, but help them, which we want to do. These are great, hardworking people.

I want to address the auto industry first. We know the difficulty we have

right now with many thousands of Americans who are in difficult straits in the auto industry right now. I believe that what we are proposing here can be a great tool for the rebirth of the American auto industry. Here's the reason I believe this.

Right now, we are in a race to build the next generation of the new car of the next couple of decades. We know it's going to be different than the car of the last several decades. We know it has to be. It has to not use as much Saudi Arabian oil so we would be addicted to Saudi Arabian oil as much.

We know it has to be advanced on materials. We are in a race to preserve the jobs of the American auto industry against folks in China who want to take these jobs and against folks in Korea who want to take these jobs. We are in a race right now with them to get these jobs in this country.

Well, to get these jobs in this country, we know we have to have the technology here to build these next generation of cars. We know to do that, we are going to need an investment to help the research and to help the retooling of these domestic auto industries to retool to start to build electric plug-in cars and the aerodynamic cars and the cars that can move to these new technologies with the new biofuel cars.

We have to win this race with China and Korea. To do that, we need an investment pool to help the auto industry to do that. Where are we going to get this pool? We are not suggesting we get it from some tax of lower- and middle-income Americans. We are suggesting we get it from an auction of the right to put pollution into the atmosphere and then use those funds to help auto workers build the cars of tomorrow and, for those who can't, to be retrained to help in some other industries, which is an important part of this.

Let me tell you why retraining is important. There's a company in Washington State called Infinia. Infinia makes a Stirling engine, a concentrating solar power system that basically it's a big parabola and concentrates the sun's energy and uses thermal energy from the sun to create electricity.

Guess who's the perfect workers to build those? It's auto workers. Because this technology is essentially right out of Detroit. Whatever you use to build a car, you use to build this Stirling engine, which could be one piece of the puzzle. They are now selling tons of these Stirling engines to Spain, and they are worried about having to build—not this company, but others in Spain—because Spain has policies like we are now advocating to try to move Spain forward. We need this right in this country.

Move to coal. People are concerned about coal. A company called Ramgen, which is a company that has figured out a way to compress carbon dioxide so you can stick it under the ground to

continue to burn coal. We know we need to have those technologies if it's going to be a meaningful player in the future.

Thanks.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Super. As we move into our last 10 minutes, I would like to turn again to my colleague from Boulder to share some of your further thoughts in terms of where you think we are now and how we move this forward.

Mr. POLIS. I'd like to build on some of my colleague from Washington's arguments about the opportunity for growth in the green economy.

My district and, in particular, Boulder, Colorado, has been a center of growth in the green jobs industry. In fact, when President Obama signed the Recovery Act a few weeks ago, he did so in Denver, and invited a company from my district, Namaste Solar, a company that had three people 3 years ago, now is up to 45 people, install solar home panels.

This has been—and, like many districts in the country, of course my district has been hit by this recession. We have seen unemployment rise. One of the biggest sectors we have seen job growth in is these green economy jobs—solar energy, the research and development.

It's not only areas that have strong solar and wind geophysical characteristics. We are also talking about energy conservation. There are several model homes in my district that are net energy positive. Put energy back on the grid. They get there, yes, with solar panels, but also by reducing their energy consumption, looking at insulation, a smart grid, and Boulder is the pilot for allowing energy consumption when there is more power on the grid and turning many homes into net energy producers during part of the day, as well, and having an intelligence aspect to appliances so they can draw from the grid when we have extra capacity.

Researching, developing and, yes, manufacturing these products are going to be a major sector for economic growth across our country in the future. When we talk about where America can still be competitive and will be competitive in manufacturing, it's in these high-tech items.

We do have a hard time, and we have been losing jobs to other countries in some of the manufacturing jobs that gave our middle class strength in the 20th century. But I am optimistic that we can grow in some of these short order, smart appliances, which traditionally have been and will continue to be developed and brought to market right here in this country, and be a critical part of this new economy.

I have had the chance to visit with a number of companies in our district. Our district is really a hot bed of entrepreneurial activity. And there are others in other parts of the country.

The more that public policy can embrace this, the more that we can serve

the dual goal of fostering economic development as well as preserving our natural heritage, reducing our carbon emissions and reliance on foreign oil, and all the issues which a number of my colleagues have so ably discussed that are critical reasons to invest in the green economy boom.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I appreciate you zeroing in, both of you, talking about the value that is added. A wind turbine, for instance, has more than 8,000 parts. There's cement, steel, ball bearings, copper, wiring. It goes up and down the production line. As soon as that order is placed, it moves out throughout the economy.

Congressman TONKO.

Mr. TONKO. Right, Congressman BLUMENAUER. I'm enthralled by the comment made by Congressman INSLEE about the auto industry and the work that we can be doing on investing in new ideas and new concepts. Just in our recovery package that we did a few weeks ago was a major investment in advanced battery technology. That advanced battery technology can speak to not only transportation sectors in our economy, but to energy generation. And it may hold the secret to an awful lot of progress that we can make.

If we continue to invest in that R&D, I'm convinced we will have the automobile of the future. Also, when we look at some of these investments in R&D, they will incorporate other sectors of the economy like the ag economy, where you can diversify that ag economy to grow the produce that would be required to go forward with some of the fuels that we can create simply by using cellulosic formulas that include perhaps switch grass or soy products or whatever and go forward in a smart way that will look at the best outcomes that we can encourage by the government, based on energy required to create new energy, impacts on the ag, impact on environment, do those quantifiable studies and then determine what path to follow.

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But we can do this with a great degree of skill and analysis that will move us into a new generation of thinking. But it takes the boldness, it takes that major step forward.

To your point about some of the opportunities with renewables, we are bringing in all aspects of opportunity from R&D from the highest technical sense on to the trades that will install these facilities and allow us to move forward with a smart grid to connect all of this, the smart metering concepts that we need to invest in so that we are using the power at the right time and making those consumer judgments that are in our best interests individually or household-wise and also collectively in a way that has the smartest energy consumers possible with the choices being placed before us and the job creation that is embraced by this sort of an agenda.

So I am really encouraged by the work that is being done in this House.

I know that in a caucus that we have created that deals with sustainable energy and environment outcomes, that is a powerful place to share these ideas and grow the synergy that will produce the policies that take us forward.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I appreciate that. And as I turn to my friend from Washington to conclude this session for us this evening, I do hope that our friends who are watching this program on TV, on C-SPAN, go to the President's budget. I hope they look on page 21. It is available at www.budget.gov. There are copies available in libraries. Look on page 21 where the President outlines his goal. He is talking about putting a price on carbon pollution, yes, returning the benefit to the American consumer, the American economy to be able to reduce our dependence on foreign oil, to reduce costs for paying for utilities, to be able to spark that green economy.

You know, I am struck by people who are making things up about what is in the President's plan and outlandish numbers that are associated with it, and I think we have gone a long way tonight towards debunking that and talking about the real cost that the American consumer and the environment is paying right now. But I am hopeful that people will embrace this, like we embraced the Clean Air Act where, on a bipartisan basis, people decided that it wasn't fair to pollute the atmosphere with sulfur dioxide; that we were going to have acid rain, that we are going to poison lakes in your area and kill forests. We put a price on it, and we were able to make remarkable progress with a very light touch as far as the government is concerned. We have this opportunity with carbon pollution to do exactly the same thing. The stakes, if anything, are higher.

I hope that our friends on the other side of the aisle stop this line of argument that somehow the Clean Air Act was a mistake, that a few polluting jobs were worth the damage that it inflicted on the environment, and ignore the lessons that we have learned.

Congressman INSLEE, I would appreciate it if you would kind of take us home.

Mr. INSLEE. Well, I would take it home to say this is an American approach to a problem. It really is. We basically are following in the footsteps of what Americans have always done when they are presented with a problem.

Number one, when Americans are presented with a challenge, we act. We don't just sit around on our hands. Some people are saying we should do nothing about this. We believe we need a new energy transformation of our economy to deal with this. So that is number one, we act. We are not a passive people.

Number two, we act with confidence in our ability to innovate and find solutions to these problems based on technological solutions. Other people think we are just too dull to figure out

how not to just burn fossil fuels. We think we are smart enough that the people who went to the moon and invented the cup holder ought to be able to invent ways to solve this problem. So we act with confidence.

Third, we would like to act in a bipartisan way. You know, you would think that growing green collar jobs and saving the planet from global warming would be a bipartisan thing; but, unfortunately, so far in this debate we have advocated an action plan, and there is a thousand ways to skin this cat, there is various ways to deal with regional cost disparities, there is various ways to distribute the pool of revenue between research and helping low income people. There is all kinds of permutations that we are going to find a consensus on eventually. But, unfortunately, our friends across the aisle have just adopted a favorite movie of Ian Fleming, "Dr. No." They have just said no. And I hope that over time some of our friends across the aisle will join us in finding a consensus on how to move forward. If we do that, we are going to continue to enjoy successes in building jobs for Americans like we have in the wind energy industry.

I will just close with this one comment. People 4 or 5 years ago said that wind turbines were kind of child's play; they were a fancy toy of a bunch of fruitcakes out on the West Coast who were dreaming in their teepees of how to solve this problem. Today, America is the leading producer of wind power in the world, and more people work today in the wind power industry than in the coal mining industry and it is the fastest growing of energy in the United States.

This is the kind of future that we believe we can move forward in. It doesn't mean that we are going to replace coal necessarily. We are going to use this money that we are going to generate from this plan to try to find a way to burn coal cleanly, because we think we ought to look at all possible approaches to this problem. So we are going to act, we are going to be confident, we are going to believe in bipartisanship, and we are going to believe in innovation. That is the American response to this problem, and I look forward to when we get this done. Thank you, Mr. BLUMENAUER.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Well said.

Mr. Speaker, we yield back the balance of our time.

ETHICAL ISSUES THAT NEED TO BE RESOLVED

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MAFFEI). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CARTER) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate being recognized for this time.

I have been coming down here now for 2 or 3 weeks talking about fact that we have some ethical issues that need to be resolved, and that is something I

think is important. I am going to try to frame that so you can understand why I think it is important.

Tonight, we have been talking about Mr. Obama's budget. I just enjoyed immensely the argument that was just made a few minutes ago about energy. And I really wish, sometime it would really be nice up here if we could do one of these things where we talk back and forth and ask questions. I would like to address that a little bit, because it is a big part of this budget. It is going to be this huge tax program that is being put together, and I would like some questions answered.

It seems to me that what I heard argued just a few minutes ago was that we have a real crisis with carbon, carbon dioxide. I think most Americans know that we are major producers of carbon dioxide. If you don't think so, take a big breath and then let it out, and you will have just produced carbon dioxide. So I think we realize that it is kind of a natural process that is going on. But if we need to fix that, then we need to slow down the amount of carbon dioxide going out into the atmosphere. And as I understand the proposal is that let's say you have a widget plant that is belching out carbon dioxide into the atmosphere in record numbers because it is burning, let's just use that horrible substance they were discussing, coal. And even though it is being scrubbed for the sulfur dioxide, which the Clean Air Act dealt with, it is still putting out carbon dioxide, the substance that is the part of the fuel of photosynthesis in plants across the entire global, including the microscopic plants that grow in the oceans of the world, and it is just too much.

Now, the plan they are proposing in the President's budget, as I understand it, is that they will have to pay a tax that the government would say this is the amount of carbon dioxide we are going to allow to come out of one source, and the government would determine what that ceiling would be. It is called a cap. And then they would say, every bit that you put out above that cap, we are going to tax you on it because we are going to use the tax money to acquire some kind of credits that the people are selling that don't pollute. Or maybe they are not even going to that. Maybe they are just saying, we are going to tax you so we can do research and development on new energy, which is what they seem to be saying tonight. If that be the case, then how does that tax stop that carbon emission out of that plant? I don't get that. Maybe someone can explain it to me.

Now, I guess, yes, you could stop it if the tax were so onerous that the plant owner said the product that I am producing, and let's say on that particular plant rather than it being widgets it is electricity, that this is going to make my cost of electricity so onerous that I won't be able to sell my electricity so I will just shut down my electricity