

that America wasn't just an accident with somebody sailing on the way to India, that Providence had His hand on this miracle, our belief in freedom and free institutions and private property, economic and political freedom, combined with this extraordinary continent of natural resources, has allowed us to build the freest and most prosperous Nation in the history of the world. We can confront every challenge facing us in the 21st century if we build on that foundation of a belief in freedom and embrace those natural resources and renewing our faith in Him who set this miracle on these shores. But it all begins with knowing what we're doing.

So let's get the details out. The American people deserve to know what's in the cap-and-tax bill before the hearings start tomorrow, and we will keep coming to this floor until we get the numbers for every single one of those Americans that will be affected.

ENERGY AND THE CLIMATE

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, it was enjoyable to listen here to my colleagues from the other side of the aisle with their version of what they would like the debate to be about.

I do hope that the American public zeros in on what we are saying here tonight, listens to my friends on the other side of the aisle, and draws their own conclusions. This is the most important discussion that we are going to have in this session of Congress.

Now, my good friend, the gentleman from Minnesota, doesn't think there are any problems with the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. It's interesting to listen to her say that something that was naturally occurring simply couldn't be harmful, ignoring the fact that we have the highest concentrations of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere for two-thirds of a million years. The consensus of the scientific community, not people making things up on the floor of the House, is that this has been profoundly influenced by human activity starting with the dawn of the Industrial Revolution, where we started consuming huge quantities of coal, burning fossil fuels, accelerating that over time. The consensus of the scientific community is that this is, in fact, a serious problem.

The debate is going far beyond sort of the modest disputes that people may take back and forth from one another that it may not work. The new Secretary of the Department of Energy has likened it to somebody who has been given an assessment by an engineer that their house is in danger of falling down, that it has an 80 percent chance of falling down or burning up because of faulty wiring. And the re-

sponse, before a rational person spends huge sums of money, they might get a second opinion. And if that second opinion says, yes, that house is going to burn up or fall down in the not too distant future, it would be not irrational to maybe get a third or a fourth. But as Secretary Chu points out, it's pretty risky business to run through all the engineering professionals until you find one outlier who says forget about it, don't worry, your house isn't going to fall down. None of us, none of us, would treat our family that way.

I am embarrassed for them that they continue to trot out the number of somehow a \$3,100 cost on the American public according to an MIT research analysis. Well, as I pointed out during the debate on the budget before the floor of the House of Representatives, that is a hopelessly tortured interpretation of some decent scientific research. The author of that study, John Reilly, sent, on the 1st of April, to JOHN BOEHNER a letter setting the record straight. Mr. Reilly indicated that it was wrong in so many ways, it's hard to begin. The fact is that they totally misrepresented the thrust of the research and they assumed that none of the benefits would flow back to the economy or the families in question.

□ 2145

Professor Reilly pointed out that that's a bogus number, that it is perhaps, at most, one-tenth of that amount, according to their research. And yet the Republican leadership and Republican members keep coming to the floor citing erroneous information, but it is symptomatic of the approach that they have taken to this critical issue. They ignore the fact that we are facing dramatic changes to our economy, to the health and future of our family, to our way of life, to the environment, if we continue down this path.

Sir Nicholas Stern issued a report on behalf of the British Government that indicated, according to their analysis, that the cost of inaction is five times greater than the threat of moving forward and making a change.

So it's one-fortieth of what BOEHNER is talking about and the other Republican talking points, but they are not comparing it to what is happening to our environment now and where this path is going with rising temperatures, with permafrost that is no longer permanent, roads buckling, changing patterns of disease, insects, problems with forests that are infested, coastal areas washed away, drought, loss of snowpack.

These are things that we are facing right now in the United States. The high likelihood is that it is a result of our dependence on fossil fuels, greenhouse gases, failure to act.

And if we follow this path, we are going to pay a much greater price over time. But it is not true that there are no benefits to this alternative.

You know, if our friends on the other side of the aisle would ignore the advice of the Republican leadership that they not be legislators, that they be

communicators, if they would ignore that, roll up their sleeves, work in the committees of jurisdiction, we would have an opportunity to have the give-and-take. We would be able to focus on optimal ways to make sure that the fees for carbon pollution are channeled back to the American public and incent new matters of economic development.

We are seeing an explosion in solar and wind energy. We have an opportunity to not only create new industries, but of making America no longer the greatest waster of energy in the world. We waste more energy than any country in the world at great cost to American families.

If the Republicans join with us, roll up their sleeves and look at alternative ways of dealing with the fees on carbon pollution, we would be able to provide opportunities for a whole host of new products, techniques, buildings and at the same time we can reduce the energy costs of American families.

It is true that if the massive polluters of carbon pollution into the atmosphere, if they are finally charged a fee, if it is no longer free for them to pollute the atmosphere with carbon like we did with sulfur dioxide, like we did with CFCs—and, I must note, at that time industry analysts, the Republicans, apologists, some of the business associations, claim that acid rain, the trading, was going to wreck the environment. They claimed that the health benefits were not supported by science.

Well, the OMB has found that the acid rain program accounted for the largest quantified human health benefits in history: \$70 billion annually, more than any federally-implemented program in the last 10 years with benefits exceeding costs more than 40-1. Likewise, when we were concerned about ozone-depleting chemicals, DuPont warned that the United States' costs would exceed \$135 billion and "entire industries would fold." Well, the actual costs were almost 100 times less, and not only didn't DuPont fold, but they made millions of dollars selling substitutes for phased-out chemicals.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that there will be some attention from the American public, attention to what the consequences will be for a fee on carbon pollution, the benefits for stopping the progress of global warming, the benefits for a whole new array of industries and practices, ways to make families safer, strengthen America, reduce our dependence on foreign oil, and move us into a path in the future.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that I am joined this evening by a number of my distinguished colleagues who are leaders in the efforts to protect the environment and the American public and to chart a new direction for environmental protection and the revitalization of our economy, creating jobs and saving the taxpayer money.

One that I would like to turn to right now is my friend PAUL TONKO from New

York, who came to Congress recently, but he has over two decades of administrative, legislative and policy experience. I have been pleased to work with him on these initiatives to share the program with him, and I would yield to my friend to provide some of his insights into this issue.

Mr. TONKO. I appreciate the gentleman from Oregon, and he obviously has an outstanding voice speaking to what is the smart approach to the future of this country and certainly to the impact that we can make on American households and on American businesses.

The country faces, undeniably, economic energy and certainly climate crises, and this is a time for a plan of action.

I believe that as we have just heard, there are these opportunities that are shelf ready, available to American consumers, to American businesses today. There are emerging technologies as we speak. This requires an immense investment.

And if there is a strategy that has been promoted here by the President that has been advanced by the Speaker of this House, NANCY PELOSI, and endorsed by the leadership, it's to move forward in a way that is intellectually honest, looking at the factors out there that exist. The human elements that are causing an impact through global warming, through climate change that are growing the carbon footprint.

The President knows that the down payment of the Recovery Act was just the beginning of the story. He knows that in order to resolve the many crises facing this country, including, primarily, an economic crisis, we need to be smart about our plan of action. He knows that it will require an investment, an investment through R&D, of research and development that will enable us to produce savings.

And we hear an awful lot of talk about a tax being imposed. The tax that is imposed is coming through billions of dollars, hundreds of billions of dollars paid by American companies, by American consumers, by households, that is going to places like the Middle East and Venezuela, paying for fossil-based fuels that are polluting our environment, that are driving downward, through these crises, the American economy.

We have an option out there, and that option is to be smart, to go forward with American-produced power, done through American jobs, to save and grow American jobs. That is a good and clever strategy. We can do this by embracing the intellectual capacity of this great Nation, shelf-ready opportunities of which I am quite familiar.

Certainly, when I was over at the Energy Research and Development Authority in New York State, I witnessed firsthand how policies and programs were implemented by that authority that is nationally inspected, and it was through the retrofits that we had done with the farming community, with the

business community, with households, through building efforts, that we were able to achieve immense savings.

These savings are dollars and benefits to the consuming public. They are job creating in terms of dynamics. When we look at the renewable standards, the renewable energy standards that are part of the package to respond to the energy crises of this country, we are talking about the creation of some 300,000 jobs.

When we look at the energy efficiency resource standards, we are looking at some 220,000 jobs. When we look at the economic savings of the energy jobs creation, the green-collar job creation, we are talking about a savings of some of \$100 billion. In the area of energy efficiency, a savings of \$170 billion. So these are real dollars. They are savings.

What I think our friends who are speaking so vociferously against this proposal do not comprehend, that savings and cleanup of our environment are benefits that are immeasurable at this point in time, and this economy requires that sort of investment, that sort of policy creation.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Absolutely spot on, and I hope that you can stay with us.

We have been joined by a number of our colleagues here, and I would like to be able to move as quickly as I can to include them, because we have truly outstanding leaders.

I want to turn next to JOHN HALL, with whom I have been privileged to serve on the Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

Our colleague, Congressman HALL, has been a leader in the environmental movement long before he came to Congress. In fact, my wife has music that he recorded, a song that maybe he will sing here from the floor, but a man truly ahead of his time, multitalented and passionate about how we save the environment.

Mr. HALL of New York. Thank you, Mr. BLUMENAUER. If you don't mind, I will confine myself to lyrics tonight.

Like you, I have noticed over the years that industries that are about to be regulated cry wolf and say that jobs will be lost.

As I recall when seat belts were first proposed for cars, the automobile industry said: Oh, you are going to put us out of business. You are going to throw people out of work. And, instead, it created a whole new industry of building and installing and maintaining seat belts. The same thing with air bags in cars: Oh, you are going to put us out of work. You are going to cause a big loss of jobs.

And, instead, SRS and other companies sprang up inventing, designing, installing and maintaining air bags in cars. The same thing goes for scrubbers on coal power plants and so on and so forth.

So I would like to speak as a member of the Transportation and Infrastruc-

ture Committee because the surface transportation bill that we are going to work on this year will be critical to solving the climate change problem. This upcoming surface transportation reauthorization is a historic opportunity to take us forward toward a 21st century solution and a 21st century transportation network and begin to deal with climate change.

If this bill does not focus, not only on building and repairing roads and bridges, which is important and does create jobs, but also on increasing the share of funding going toward mass transit, then it will be a missed opportunity.

If the bill does not increase funding for alternative modes of transportation like bicycles and pedestrian walking paths and intercity passenger rail, then it will be a missed opportunity. If this bill does not change the way we think about land use planning so that we focus on smart growth, good land use planning principles and transit-oriented development and complete streets, we will have missed an opportunity.

And if this bill does not encourage the use of renewable fuels on electric vehicles and plug-in hybrids, it will be a missed opportunity.

□ 2200

I must remark that a couple of weeks ago I drove one of the test vehicles that was here outside that gets 250 miles per gallon in the plug-in hybrid version. And the pure electric version, I'm sure you saw it here, I won't mention the brand name because I don't want to be seen as endorsing a particular company, but we could find it on the Internet with a little search. The pure electric version currently gets a 70-mile-per-hour top speed and 100-mile range, well within the commuting range and the speed necessities of most commuters. So we need to look at all these things that, hopefully, will do that in this bill.

Furthermore, there's a great opportunity not just to mitigate climate change effects which have environmental and public health benefits, but also in developing new technologies which cannot or should not be outsourced. We should be creating jobs right here the United States and reinvigorating our economy. We, the country who put a man on the Moon, should be leading the way in these new technologies and not conceding that lead, new technologies to other countries.

So I will stay around to take part in the discussion for a little while. But I appreciate, Congressman BLUMENAUER, your organizing this hour, and thank you for inviting me to be a part of it.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I deeply appreciate your comments, your insights. We'll worry about the music later.

But it is something that you have helped me with, some of the insights that you've offered on our work on the Global Warming Committee, and I appreciate your joining us.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Oregon?

There was no objection.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Congressman HIMES, a new Member of Congress, but somebody who has been involved with community development and finance for a number of years at the local level in Connecticut, has already hit the ground running, being actively involved in these debates and deeply appreciate your willingness to enter into this discussion this evening.

Mr. HIMES. Thank you, Mr. BLUMENAUER. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am deeply honored to be standing on this floor where, for over a century and a half, our predecessors have taken the tough decisions, made the hard choices to set the American economy up for greatness. I'm talking about the investment in the highway system. I'm talking about the investment in the Internet, which has opened up vast new swaths of our economy. And we have that kind of opportunity now. In fact, we have that challenge right now. And the question is, will we find the will to rise to that challenge?

And I want to confine my remarks tonight to a very, very important topic, which is the fact that we have a renewable energy resource that is clean, cheap, abundant and available right now, by which of course I refer to the energy that we don't use because we conserve it, because we take advantage of the ugly fact that we are far too inefficient in our use of energy.

There is a history to this. We would simply be accelerating something that has been true now for decades. The Alliance to Save Energy estimates that without the efficiency gains that we were forced to make starting in 1973, when foreign nations decided to force us to make these efficiency gains, that we would use 50 percent more energy than we used to. And there's a lesson here. There is a lesson here that we can continue, not because a foreign country forces us to do it, but that we can choose to affirmatively capture this readily available energy resource.

Let me comment on a couple of ideas and areas that I happen to know well, having worked on the rehabilitation of this country's affordable housing stock for many years. The fact is that roughly 40 percent of the energy that we use in this country is used in our built environment, in our homes, our building, our commercial facilities, and we operate far less efficiently than we might.

At Enterprise Community Partners, we would do a rehabilitation of a 100-year-old tenement, 5-, 6-story tenement in New York City, built at a time when coal was pennies per ton and, therefore, builders and architects didn't think

about efficiency. We would rehabilitate that structure and take 60 or 70 percent of the energy usage out of that building, 60 to 70 percent out a building which represents collectively 40 percent of the this country's energy usage.

You can't always achieve 60 or 70 percent. In our homes we achieve something; when we weatherize we achieve something like 30 percent energy savings. And I'm delighted and proud that the Recovery Act that passed on this floor made available \$1 billion for weatherization around this country.

I was holding a caulk gun a mere 36 hours ago helping to weatherize a home in Bridgeport, Connecticut, where not only would we reduce the energy used in that home, but we would create a healthier home for the individual. And as it happened, these programs target low-income individuals, and so we would cut their energy bill substantially. And in this particular home, this woman was struggling to pay her bills. And if we could take 30 percent off of her utility bills, that would make all the difference between the kind of food she could buy, whether she could take some time off, whether she might educate her children. We can do this. And I'm delighted to say that as part of this much broader effort to rise to the generational challenge of our day, we will be submitting legislation very soon that will require the use of green building standards in HUD-subsidized housing; that will provide financing mechanisms which bridge a gap which has existed for far too long, a guarantee which recognizes the fact that you can spend a little bit of extra money, not a lot, a little bit of extra money to build green, but that you quickly get that money back in reduced utility and power bills in 2, 3 and 4 years.

This mechanism would simply guarantee lending associated with that small increment of additional capital that will very rapidly be repaid through reduced operating costs.

This bill, we hope will drop this week and, hopefully, will take a very big step towards addressing what is 40 percent of the energy usage in this country. So I'm just as excited as possible to stand here with my colleagues to say that we will rise to the generational challenge of our era.

My colleagues on the other side of this floor often are fond of asking us what sorts of burdens are we placing on our children and our grandchildren. The reality is that the energy consumption and use that this country does right now places a tremendous burden in health, in costs for remediation, in pollution, in further subservience to foreign energy sources on to our children. We have done this for too long. We are presented with a generational challenge that, on this floor, for 150 years, has been met by wise men and women who stood up and said we will take the hard decisions.

Change is never easy. But we will take the hard decisions because our

children deserve and should expect nothing less from us.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Thank you very, very much. And I appreciate your point about the cheapest kilowatt is the kilowatt that we don't expend, that we don't have to build the coal-fired plant or even a solar collector. And we have watched what has happened over the course of the last 30 years because business now in the United States does produce more product per kilowatt than it did before.

This is not going to be easy. And it's not going to be without cost and consequence. But I am absolutely convinced that the hardest part is not going to be the technology, but it's cutting through the misrepresentation and the misunderstandings and, in some cases, I think, willful misrepresentation of the facts.

I was stunned to hear the gentle lady from Minnesota, from the floor of the well tonight, declare that carbon dioxide concentrations were not a problem because carbon dioxide appears naturally in the atmosphere; this coming after the EPA has finally owned up to its responsibilities and acknowledged the fact that the concentration, the greater concentration of carbon dioxide is, in fact, a threat to human health.

Mercury occurs naturally in the environment. But when it is concentrated in the wrong places, it can be deadly. And we need to just be able to get to the heart of some of these issues and sweep aside some of these misrepresentations that, frankly, are dangerous, if they're not refuted.

We've been joined this evening by my colleague, Congressman MASSA from New York, a Naval Academy graduate, a retired Navy commander, serves on a number of committees, but important for the discussion this evening, he's on the House Agriculture Committee, and on the subcommittee that deals with conservation, credit, energy and research, both in his committee assignment and the work that he's done, in his area of upstate New York, or not upstate, I'm not saying it right. I know where it is, to the west. And Congressman, we welcome some observations and comments that you would have.

□ 2210

Mr. MASSA. Thank you very much. It is an honor to be here tonight, and it is a privilege to speak in a space that has seen the great debates that have shaped this country, and now we embark on just such a debate.

The reality is I rise today with a unique perspective, frankly, from a small town in western New York State, in the heart of Upstate New York, my hometown of Corning, New York. I am reminded of the arguments and debates of the early 1970s when we realized that the crushing burden of smog that obscured the buildings of our great cities like New York and Los Angeles was comprised largely of nitrous oxide, ironically, another naturally occurring

chemical but, when concentrated in parts per million above 30, became deadly. Some of us in this Chamber are old enough to remember, looking out at television scenes and, in fact, living in our great metropolises where we could not see a half a mile on a smoggy day, and yet the scientists of this great Nation went to work and understood that it was largely the nitrous oxide being emitted from unregulated internal combustion engines that was literally choking us to death.

Those same scientists, many of them in my hometown of Corning, New York, invented the catalytic converter, and found a way through that process to remove nitrous oxide from the exhaust streams of automobiles. When that solution was laid before chambers like this and before legislatures all over this country, it was deemed, as it often is deemed by my close and intimate friends and colleagues on the other side of the aisle, as attacks. It was said to be a job-killing innovation that would destroy the automobile industry, that would drive millions from their jobs. Yet I come from a town that was fundamentally transformed by that technology and by the provisions of the Clean Air Act of the early 1970s, interestingly enough, formulated largely by some of the same leaders who today stand to draw this country forward under a new cap-and-trade regime that will install and initiate the same revolutionary technologies because, where I come from, thousands of working-class Americans found new jobs in creating innovative technologies and in removing nitrous oxide to the manufacture of catalytic converters—one, two and sometimes four—which are today on every automobile manufactured in the United States of America, throughout Europe and in most of the Far East.

The proof is as clear as the clean skies of Los Angeles where just 30 years ago you could not see the Los Angeles bay from the skyscrapers that overlooked the Pacific Ocean. Yet the argument from my dear and intimate colleagues on the other side of the aisle is always to say “no.” It is to say “no” at the opportunity of every great innovation this Nation in the world has stood to see every single time. It is to scare the public. Tell them they’ll be taxed, and stop technological innovation when, in fact, it is just that regime that will power this Nation well beyond the 21st century.

The last 40 years have seen us move forward in information technology, and now we stand on the cusp of an entirely new economy based on jobs that cannot be exported and on environmental technologies. I come from a small town that has already lived and seen that. It is time for us to fear not. It is time for us to stand in the light of day and to tell the truth.

For the first time in generations, almost a third of the House of Representatives is represented by those who are the sophomore and freshman class, who have been sent here with a mandate by

the American people to do the work that needs to be done, not to stand and say “no” and to be obscure and obstructionist but, rather, to get the job done. It is on our shoulders, not fearful of elections, not fearful of false facts, not fearful of lies and of insinuations and of distortions but, rather, to stand in the clear air, much of it created through the innovations that we saw in the Clean Air Act in the 1970s.

It is an honor to stand and to be part of this great debate. Let the debate begin here and now with truth and clarity and forcefulness. Thank you. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Thank you, and I appreciate your bringing this home in very real terms about what the upside has been and what you have seen in Corning as making a difference. Your point about some of the newer Members of Congress, I think, is well taken.

I am struck by the range of talent that we’ve seen here this evening in terms of people who have been legislators, policymakers, businesspeople, musicians. We’re about to hear from another colleague, BEN RAY LUJÁN from New Mexico. In a prior life, he was one of those people charged with actually getting it right in terms of regulation. He was chairman of the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission, and as commissioner, he worked to develop the renewable portfolio standard in New Mexico to increase their renewable energy production by New Mexico utilities to 20 percent by 2020. I’m hopeful that he can give some insights based on his experience as somebody who has been on the ground, working on it, bringing that knowledge to Congress.

Mr. LUJÁN. Mr. BLUMENAUER, I’ll tell you it’s an honor to be here this evening and to be here with so many of our colleagues when we’re talking about a new direction and about moving the country forward and about developing the jobs and policies that will truly transform the way we look at energy, at the way we deliver energy, and at the way we appreciate the resourcefulness of the American people.

In a former life, not many years ago—actually, not many days ago—I had the opportunity and the privilege of serving on the New Mexico Public Regulatory Commission. It’s the equivalent of public utility commissions around the country. In New Mexico a few years ago, we increased the renewable portfolio standard, the amount of energy that would be produced from utilities in the State of New Mexico, the amount of energy that would come from the sun and from the wind. We were looking to see how we could take advantage of those resources, resources that we know to be abundant all across the country, but it wasn’t just a matter of talking about increasing the amount of energy from one particular source. It was about looking at the way that we could adopt technology and innovation, looking to see how we could ultimately lower the cost of utility bills for people around New Mexico.

A lot of people have asked me, “Well, BEN, when you talk about that and you say, ‘well, we’re going to increase the amount of energy that’s going to come from the sun and from the wind,’ how, indeed, are you going to lower utility bills ultimately for the customers of New Mexico when they say that this technology is so expensive and that we’re not sure how we’re going to be able to move this renewable energy generation forward?”

Well, what’s interesting is, when you talk about natural gas and when you look to see the amount of a utility bill that that makes up and when you talk about the fuel source, it’s about 60–65 percent of the utility bill when you’re heating your home with natural gas. In New Mexico, it’s something we depend on. When you talk about electricity generation and you look at that fuel source, it can range anywhere from 25–35 percent of your utility bill. Well, what a novel thought.

If we’re able to utilize free fuel sources, a fuel source that comes from the sun and the wind—renewable resources—and you can eliminate that costly utility bill, it will ultimately drive those costs down. We’ll be smarter about the technology that we’re moving forward. We’ll be smarter about the partners that we’re engaging with.

Our Los Alamos National Laboratory and national laboratories around the country are research institutions that are moving forward and are coming up with new technologies that are ultimately bringing down the cost of renewable energy, making it more resourceful, making it more of a reality, but making it happen.

I’ve heard from a few of my colleagues who are concerned about rural parts of the country and how it would impact them if we move forward with the strong, renewable energy generation plan in the United States. Well, I come from a rural State. I come from a State where the rural electric cooperatives are participating in our renewable portfolio standard, the equivalent of our renewable electricity standard that we’re talking about.

Just the other day, there was an announcement of a 30-megawatt new facility that is going to be built in a rural part of New Mexico, in the northeastern part of our State, creating up to 120–140 construction jobs. Not including that, we’re also going to be creating a real working laboratory, a working environment for our students to go in and to take advantage of learning how to install these phenomenal resources, these large panels and how we’re going to move that power. We’re teaching these students how they can take advantage of jobs into the future.

□ 2220

But then teaching these students how they can take advantage of jobs into the future.

We made it happen in New Mexico. We worked with our colleagues in Western States. We worked with colleagues across the East and to the West, working to make sure that we were implementing best practices.

It's amazing what happens when you get new ideas and good ideas together. And you lean on the ingenuity and the perseverance of the American people. You know, when it comes to energy, the United States has always been a leader, and we need to be a leader when it comes to being smarter about the way we're generating power and the way that we're moving power.

I heard from my good friend, Mr. HIMES, talk about the importance of building standards and how the community can come together to make a difference in our homes. This last week, I was home and there is a group of students with the youth corps that has come together, and they are actually going to be building a new home for the Habitat for Humanity program for a woman in the community. It's going to be a green home. It's students getting together working with builders to learn how to build our buildings with these new, innovative ways and being smarter about the ways we're doing things. Ultimately, lower utility bills for this family, being able to send their kids and their family to school.

It's so exciting, and you get so passionate when you talk about what can be done, and through the leadership with Speaker PELOSI, with the President, with the budget resolution, the commitment of the American Recovery Act towards a new energy future and a new energy certainty for the United States.

It's amazing to be part of this, Mr. BLUMENAUER.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. We appreciate you making a critical point about the difference between the price in what people pay on the bill and your notion of how we are more energy efficient, we're smarter, we have competition and the benefits that you, through your leadership, did in New Mexico and now over half the States have gone ahead following. And hopefully it's time the Federal Government is able to do that as well.

I wonder, turning to Mr. TONKO, if, based on your experience, actually on the ground with work in the leadership in the legislative assembly of New York, chairing the committee and your work with the entity in New York dealing with energy efficiency, if there is something that stands out in your mind as an example that illustrates this principle that you think would give us a path of what we can expect in the future.

Mr. TONKO. Obviously, a number of opportunities, and I thank you again, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Representative BLUMENAUER, for putting this forum together this evening.

But I think immediately of opportunities to work with our business community with manufacturing, retro-

fitting it with energy-efficiency outcomes. That enables us to see that as a microcosm of activity that when engaged in full efforts, can really repower America in a way that produces jobs, cuts energy costs, and produces wonderful savings to our environment, and certainly to those manufacturers out there in businesses that struggle in this economy.

I look at situations that the price tag for doing nothing means that we lose a market share to places like China, like Germany, like Korea. Doing nothing means losing jobs, energy, green collar jobs to those same nations. Doing nothing means continuing to be taxed in a way that sends money to Venezuela and the Mid East.

But when you ask for a specific example, one that comes to mind also is retrofitting of the dairy industry in the State of New York. That was done through the auspices of NyCerta, the State Energy Research and Development Authority, while I was still at the New York State Assembly chairing the energy committee. We worked in tandem with the local utility, with National Grid. We worked with Cornell University with its efforts to retrofit that dairy sector with energy efficiency seen as the fuel of choice out there. Working with the energy service companies, working with a group of policymakers from within the State Assembly. All of that working in a team spirited way that had, as demonstration projects, two dairy farms. And without even adjusting the rate for the power that they utilize, they had achieved immense savings simply through reducing demand.

And then that demonstration project with two farms was further extrapolated over 70 participants, all of whom had seen the same sorts of positive results, reducing demand severely.

This is where we're at. We're at a cutting knowledge of opportunity. We're looking at embracing technology in a way that can allow us to practically produce change. That is about job creation. It's about consumer behavior adjustment. It's about the boldness of leadership. It's allowing us to develop the blueprints, the greenprints for tomorrow. And we have the capacity today. There are tons of practical examples.

Even at NyCerta. A demonstration project with kinetic hydropower where the turbulence of the East River alongside Manhattan was producing power that was used in that given region. And there are theories suggesting that some 1,100 megawatts' worth of power statewide could be the result in New York State alone. Think of it: if we multiply that over the many States of this country; think of it if we make the investments that are asked of us here by doing this program in a way that caps the amount of pollution out there, rewards the good behavior and creates the resources to implement the science and technology that is within our grasp today.

There is great potential here. Great job creation, great savings of energy, which is a precious commodity, and the ability to do an American-produced agenda—American-produced power to grow and retain American jobs in a way that creates a new segment of employment out there: employees who are green collar workers. Great potential for the country.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. As we're winding down, I would like to turn again to my colleague, Congressman HALL.

Mr. HALL of New York. Thank you.

I would like to emphasize jobs. It's astonishing to me that the chorus from the other side of the aisle here seems to be that we're going to lose jobs when in fact the U.S. Conference of Mayors released a study recently showing that renewable power generation alone will lead to the creation of over 4.2 million new jobs in manufacturing, legal, construction, engineering, consulting, and research sectors.

And like my colleague, Mr. HIMES, I recently spent a couple of days with my work gloves on and my jeans and a hard hat working doing retrofitting, weatherization of homes in my home county of Dutchess County of New York where last year the Dutchess County Community Action Program only retrofitted and weatherized 183 homes. This year, thanks to the stimulus package, they are looking at over a thousand homes already lined up. They are going to be hiring five times as many people to go out on those teams.

In my district alone, there are many exciting new companies from low-tech to high-tech. For example, Taylor Biomass Energy has an exciting new patent process that turns municipal solid waste, MSW, into clean-burning gas for electricity generation using a process that is carbon negative. The end result is 75 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions because when you take that trash, that organic household waste, whatever it is, goes into the landfill and turns into methane and goes out those upside-down J-shaped fences and goes out into the atmosphere is actually worse than carbon dioxide, 20 times worse.

SpectraWatt, which has just announced a major investment in my district, is creating state-of-the-art solar technology, and they will be building solar panels which we hopefully will sell not only around the country, maybe to New Mexico, but also to other countries like India or China or Germany who right now are in the lead.

Cities and towns are asking for help to do the same thing. The City of Beacon in my district just asked for funds which I was able to secure to install a new solar electric power system on their municipal building, developing a comprehensive plan for a city which recognizes the value of free energy and no emissions. It's sort of the win-win policy because it hires people to make the panels and it hires people to

install them. And once they get past that initial payoff—and of course the higher the price of gas or diesel or electricity from other sources goes, then the better this looks.

And they will also use it as an educational tool for the students in the City of Beacon, New York, to be able to see how renewable energy works.

□ 2230

And, lastly, I would just say, echoing Congressman TONKO's statements about tidal power and hydropower, that New York State alone, according to the Idaho National Laboratory Web site, which is an offshoot of the Department of Energy's Web site, has more than 4,000 low-head hydroelectric sites. Those are existing dams and waterfalls where water is falling every day by the ton and not being used, going to waste. And just by putting the properly sized turbines where water is already falling, they estimate that we could generate 12 megawatts of power. And think of the people it would hire. That was when you were speaking, Mr. TONKO, I wanted to make this comment that you are hiring electrical workers, you are hiring mechanics, you are hiring engineers, you are, in some cases, hiring attorneys because there are liability questions with orphan dams that need to be worked out. But you are hiring a wide spectrum of workers with different kinds of jobs, ranging from construction and electrical work, to sheet metal, to engineering and so on, and transportation jobs.

And then not only that, but then you have a decentralized grid with a lot of smaller points of generation as opposed to having one huge note of generation and another huge note of consumption and worrying about blackouts occurring in between. So there are many reasons for us to go down this path, and one of them is that many, many jobs will be created by it.

With that, I yield back.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Congressman HIMES, any last words?

Mr. HIMES. Well, I just reiterate. We see a tremendous commitment on this floor at this late hour to what I really believe is the legacy that we will leave for those who follow in our footsteps. I really believe that this is the generational challenge of our time. And we will be truthful about it; we will explain it to the American people. And we will act or we will fall prey to the misinformation, to the fear, to the anxiety that is rooted in the desire for political gain, but also in the natural fear that many people have of change.

So I would just close with the notion that we need to stand united and go forward with this terribly important initiative.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I appreciate your providing that context. I have been involved in the political process all my life. I have watched people meet challenges. I have watched people come up to the edge and simply not have the wherewithal to follow through.

This seems to me to be one of the areas that is most exciting because of the leadership that has been articulated here on the floor. We are finding that actually we have to run to keep up with the public. We have 906 cities across America that have decided they weren't going to wait for the Bush administration, they were moving forward. Each of us have cities, college campuses, churches and synagogues in our district that are rolling up their sleeves and willing to move forward, and I find that a truly exciting development.

As we are winding down, I see Congressman MASSA. I appreciated your earlier eloquence and focusing in on what difference it made to your hometown. Do you have any concluding thoughts?

Mr. MASSA. Well, Congressman and colleagues, thank you very much. After I concluded my remarks, I noticed that I had received a text message from my 18-year-old daughter. My 18-year-old daughter, like many of her age, represents an entirely different way of looking at the future, one, frankly, framed by optimism and not constrained by the ideology of "no." And she text me a message and said, "You go, dad."

Many tell me that I get impassioned about these issues on the floor of the House, and there is some truth in that. But I ask my colleagues and I ask those people who sent me here to Washington and I ask us all, how can you not be? When you are confronted with the tremendous challenges that we face—and I hope I am mistaken, but I know I am not, because I do believe that global climate change is real and that there is an immediate imperative—but I combine that umbrella under which we conduct this discussion with the very hard-core business reality that we are presented with a tremendous economic and business opportunity to begin a process. And I am honored to be part of that process as we speak power to truth and debunk the incredible false statements that sometimes rise on the floor of this House to scare people away from taking the bold steps that we were sent here to take.

So I look forward to being back with you and my colleagues, the scientists, Representatives like my fellow New Yorker, PAUL TONKO, who already has an incredible legacy of leadership in New York, to my good friend, Congressman HALL, who, frankly, has led this not just from the floor of a stage, but from an absolute understanding of the imperative of science, and to those few words that I can add to this great debate as we move forward to undertake this challenge. I thank you for the opportunity to join you tonight.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Well, you go, indeed, Mr. MASSA.

Congressman LUJÁN.

Mr. LUJÁN. Mr. BLUMENAUER, and to my colleagues here, we are talking about jobs. And I am reminded of a

group of ranchers and farmers on the eastern side of my district in a mainly rural part that came together and they invested and they worked together to invest in the building of wind power, wind generation, wind turbines. And as a community, they came together with the Mesalands Community College in a small town by the name of Tucumcari, New Mexico, to build the National Wind Turbine Research Center out in the rural part of our State, training young people, creating jobs, investing in their community.

And you have to think back to the lack of investment that we saw over the last 8 years. And that is what we are talking about, investing in America, investing in Americans, investing in education, and investing in a new way of generating energy.

It is great to be part of a Congress that is moving forward with this new direction and a Congress that is working boldly, making sure that we are listening to the American people, working with the President, making sure that we are truly being responsible toward those that have entrusted us to do the good work that we are doing here today.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I can't tell you thanks enough for putting this hour together so we can talk to our friends, our family, the American people about the truth of the matter in this important debate, that we are going to need them to move forward, to work closely with us as we work with them to make this happen and to transform the way that we generate power, look at power, and save power in our great Nation. Thank you very much.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Thank you, Congressman LUJÁN.

Congressman HALL, thank you so much, Congressman HIMES, Congressman TONKO. We deeply appreciate your taking time out. It is only 7:36 back home in Oregon, but for you gentlemen, it is the end of a long day—or you are probably going back to your offices. And being willing to be part of this discussion tonight and the work that you are doing in the committees and providing the leadership, for me it is inspirational, and I deeply appreciate it.

I appreciate your focusing in on the economic benefits, even putting aside the problems that we are facing as a result of global warming, but the opportunities to help families reduce their utility bills, to live more comfortably, to create not just thousands of jobs or tens of thousands of jobs, we are talking literally about millions of jobs. And already, as you pointed out this evening, we are seeing the glimmer of what can happen as a result of the economic recovery package.

We are seeing that there are all sorts of advantages from simply moving forward apart from that, in terms of the cost savings, given the fact that energy costs are going to be going back up in the foreseeable future without question. And last, but not least, the cost of

inaction dwarfs the cost of action. The downside risk is truly chilling. We are seeing that mount. We have seen study after study that shows that the American economy risks losing trillions of dollars of productivity. And the relatively small amount that we would be investing to forestall disaster seems like a bargain.

I appreciate your willingness to join with us this evening. I hope that we will be able to continue this discussion, not just in our committees, but here on the floor, to be able to put the bigger picture together. And I look forward to continuing that conversation with you.

Mr. Speaker, we thank you for the opportunity to share this with the American people tonight and yield back our time.

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak tonight, on the eve of Earth Day with respect to the most critical environmental crisis that this nation has ever faced: climate change. As daunting as this challenge is, I am proud that this Congress has done more in the past two months to combat climate change than the previous Administration accomplished in eight years.

With passage of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, we invested over \$70 billion in clean, renewable energy. This important legislation will save or create over three million jobs. In the area of clean, renewable energy we will put people to work weatherizing homes of low income Americans. The previous Administration proposed eliminating all funding for the Weatherization Assistance Program. This stimulus legislation will invest \$5 billion dollars over two years, which will weatherize at least two million homes. A wide range of studies suggests that weatherization is the most efficient way to save money while reducing greenhouse gas emissions. With the stimulus legislation, we are off to a great start.

The stimulus also invested \$8.4 billion in transit and \$8 billion in high speed rail. Communities around the nation, including my 11th District of Virginia, are suffering from congestion that threatens to constrain economic growth in some of the most productive communities in the Nation. These transit investments will give commuters choices, reduce congestion, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. They will spur economic development while reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The stimulus invests \$2 billion in advanced battery research. This field is essential to develop the next generation of plug in hybrids and to store solar energy. With solar companies creating jobs throughout our region, we must make the investments in innovation that will continue to grow the green jobs sector. America invented the photovoltaic solar panel, yet Germany, China, and Japan now lead us in solar panel production. With these investments, in addition to loan guarantees, we will once again have the opportunity to lead the world in production of green energy. By investing in the development of a smart grid, we will ensure that we conserve energy at home while enabling the transmission of renewable energy.

Although we are already seeing benefits of the stimulus, whether it is repaving potholed roads or creating green jobs, we know that we cannot rest while carbon emissions continue to rise in America, China, and India. We must

lead by passing comprehensive greenhouse gas reduction legislation that reaches 80 percent reductions in emissions by 2050, with aggressive but achievable shorter term targets. Without this legislation we will not be able to bring China and India to the table to develop binding goals for those large carbon emitters.

I look at greenhouse gas legislation as an opportunity. For a quarter of a century, we have accepted dependence on foreign oil. For a quarter of a century, we have accepted dramatic declines in mining jobs even as our communities are devastated by acid mine drainage and mountaintop removal. For a quarter of a century, we have lost market share in auto sales as we clung to production of gas guzzling dinosaurs.

No more will we accept the constraints that accompany an unwillingness to innovate. We may look forward to greenhouse gas legislation that sends a strong market signal to invest once again in America: in efficient automobiles, in wind turbines, in solar panels, in weatherization, in transit. These investments will not only protect our climate, and thus our coastal communities and agricultural heartland, but also lay the groundwork for a new age of industrial expansion founded on technological innovation.

The environment cannot sustain further increases in carbon emissions and neither can our economy. We must act now to pass greenhouse gas reduction legislation that protects our climate while unequivocally redirecting our economy toward a clean energy future.

HEALTH CARE IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) is recognized for half the time to midnight.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I have come to the floor tonight to talk about health care, but some of the comments that we have just heard in the last hour, I just feel obligated to respond. I cannot let the fantasies that are put forward on this floor stand unchallenged.

We heard the statement made that no investment in renewable energy occurred in the last 8 years. That is absolutely preposterous. The State of Texas has one of the most aggressive renewable portfolio standards in the country. In fact, the State of Texas is the leader in the generation of wind.

And this did not spring from the Earth fully formed on January 21 of this year. This has been the product of well over a decade of hard work back in the State, our renewable portfolio standard that, I might add, was signed into law by Governor George W. Bush back in the 1990s in the State of the Texas.

□ 2240

Please, let's have the debate, but let's argue from the standpoint of facts. Let's not continue to engage in this fantasy that nothing has occurred over the last 8 years. Nothing makes the American people more angry than to hear this type of falsehood repeated over and over again.

Texas is the leader in the production of wind energy. We have an aggressive renewable portfolio standard, and all of that was initiated under the governorship of George W. Bush. It has been continued under the Republican governorship of Rick Perry and, yes, during the 8-year Presidency of George W. Bush.

Thank you for letting me get that off my chest. Now on to health care.

Mr. Speaker, the Health Caucus Web site went live this week, www.healthcaucus.org. I formed the Health Caucus earlier this year because I felt it was important to have a forum to talk about some of the changes, some of the things that we are seeing in this health care debate. The Health Caucus is not a legislative caucus. We're not going to write the law. That never was the intention of the Health Caucus. But the intention of the Health Caucus was to provide a forum where ideas can be exchanged, and, indeed, that's exactly what has happened. And I want to talk about a couple of those that we have had recently. It was to provide a vehicle for Member education so Members who perhaps weren't as familiar with issues surrounding health care would have an opportunity to avail themselves of recent information and prepare themselves for the debates, prepare themselves for the legislative process that's going to be ahead of us.

Certainly a great deal of effort in the Health Caucus is spent towards staff training, to prepare the communications staff for Member offices on how to communicate with constituents about health care, how to communicate effectively in the health care debate that is going to be ahead of us. And probably most important or one of the most important functions of the Health Caucus that was recently formed is outreach.

We spend a lot of time here in Washington, we spend a lot of time in windowless rooms in the basement of the Capitol of the new Capitol Visitor Center. And as beguiling as those accommodations are, it always seems that we have the same discussion with the same people rehashing the same ideas over and over and over again. And yet out across the country, there are men and women who are engaged and involved in this debate. They are engaged and involved in the actual delivery of health care, taking care of actual real patients on a day-in and day-out basis. They kind of know what works; they kind of know what doesn't. And it is so important for us to go out and solicit those stories, take the advice of the men and women who are working in the health care industry, and bring that information back to Washington, learn from what works, learn from what doesn't work. There is no reason that we should continue policies or try to develop policies that have been proven not to work, say, in a State jurisdiction or a State venue, but it is very important that we learn from