

this drought lasts a fourth or a fifth year, California will be rationing water in southern California and in the Bay Area, and we will see a horrific set of circumstances affecting our State.

So it is time to act now, both with the short-term remedies as well as with the long-term remedies. We need to try to do everything we can to plan for the next year in the event that this drought continues. We need to provide flexibility at the Federal and State pumps to move water around, to make water banks work, and yes, in the long term, we need to fix the plumbing system in the delta.

California has 38 million people. By the year 2030, it is estimated we will have 50 million people. We have a water system designed for 20 million people. It cannot work. So, with a larger coalition of the Latino Water Caucus, we marched on water in April. We are going to continue to march. We are going to continue to try to seek out our colleagues who want to constructively help us with the administration to understand that both short-term and long-term investments in California infrastructure are critical if we are going to solve this problem.

This is a forerunner of what's occurring, not just here in California but around the world. Water is the lifeblood of man's ability to produce food and fiber. The problems we are having in California today are happening around the world. We need to act today.

VETERANS COMMUNICATION IMPROVEMENT ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. HEINRICH) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HEINRICH. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise today to introduce the Veterans Communication Improvement Act. This bill will provide for a smoother transition for servicemembers moving to veteran status, and it will help facilitate the communication between all veterans and veterans' services.

Currently, when a servicemember concludes his service to our country, he fills out a form known as the DD-214. This form is essentially a compilation of a member's time in the military. It includes awards and medals and other pertinent service information such as promotions, combat service or service overseas. The DD-214 also contains information needed to verify military service for benefits, retirement, employment, and membership in veterans' organizations, which makes it one of the most important documents in the military.

As to be expected, the DD-214 contains the current physical address and phone number of the veteran, but there is no place on the form for a veteran to include his or her e-mail as the best way to be contacted. Far too often,

however, when servicemembers return home from active duty or if a veteran has simply moved to a new home, they lose contact with the Department of Veterans Affairs. This bill will enable one more avenue of communication, an e-mail address, to be included on each servicemember's DD-214 form.

For many veterans, particularly for our youngest veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, a personal e-mail address is the most common and efficient way to communicate with them. In utilizing modern e-mail technology, this legislation will make great strides in expediting the delivery of benefits that our country's veterans unquestionably deserve. These brave Americans and their families have made immeasurable sacrifices to our Nation's well-being. I am honored to sponsor this legislation, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

REGIONAL IMPACTS OF CLEAN ENERGY LEGISLATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. I thank the Speaker.

Today, I rise as a southern Congressman to discuss the regional impacts, Mr. Speaker, on clean energy legislation and on a renewable electricity standard in particular.

We have heard that it is impossible to have a national renewable electricity standard, because different States have different renewable energy resources, and that the southeastern United States, in particular, would be unable to meet targets established by the renewable electricity standard in the draft American Clean Energy and Security Act now being considered by the Energy and Commerce Committee of this body.

I represent a State in which there is not a single utility-scale renewable generation facility. The Virginia General Assembly has not enacted a mandatory renewable electricity standard, so we have failed to create market certainty for firms that would invest in renewable energy otherwise. In contrast, New Jersey has 44 megawatts of grid-connected solar capacity, fueled in part by a 22.5 percent renewable electricity standard with solar set aside. New Jersey has more than twice as much grid-connected solar energy generation than the total for all States without a renewable electricity standard, including Virginia, even though it has less solar exposure than any State in the Southeast. What we have witnessed in the Southeast is not a lack of natural resources but, perhaps, a lack of political will.

Since we are in the midst of the most severe economic contraction since the Great Depression, the clean energy jobs legislation before us represents not an academic debate but, rather, an opportunity to spur economic growth and to reduce greenhouse gas pollution based

in successful policies that have been enacted at home and abroad.

Just as more than half of our States have enacted successful renewable electricity standards, so too have other nations. Germany, for example, has a lower solar exposure than almost all of the United States, and yet it is the world's leader in renewable energy, as documented in a recent article in the National Journal. In the last decade, the number of Germans employed in the renewable energy sector has grown from 30,000 to 280,000. Germany has installed 22,247 megawatts of wind energy and 3,811 megawatts of solar photovoltaic. Strong mandatory incentives for renewable energy have fueled this jobs boom in Germany.

The number of coal mining jobs in the United States has fallen by 50 percent in the last three decades, principally due to mechanization. Those coal jobs disappeared from States like Virginia and West Virginia, which lack incentives for renewable energy. In Germany, on the other hand, the number of coal mining jobs also has fallen, but the number of renewable energy jobs created has more than offset the lost jobs by a factor of five. Unfortunately, many U.S. companies, like First Solar, have built factories in Germany rather than here in America because Germany had requirements for renewable energy production.

The minority claims that a clean energy bill will result in net job losses, but in reality, we are losing jobs right now because we do not have a stronger clean energy policy. We cannot cling to antiquated modes of energy production that are hemorrhaging jobs and then expect to achieve, much less expedite, an economic recovery here at home. If we are to drive economic growth, we must invest in innovation and in job creation, not in exhausted resources and outmoded systems of production.

Here in the South, where we have not benefited from strong renewable energy incentives, we need a national renewable electricity standard to create new jobs in both mill towns that have lost jobs overseas and in prosperous business centers such as those I represent in northern Virginia. The Southeast has wind resources in the Continental Shelf, in the Appalachian Mountains, and it has good solar exposure throughout our entire region.

Now is the time, Mr. Speaker, to exploit those natural resources and to produce energy right here at home. Now is the time to pass clean energy jobs legislation with a strong renewable electricity standard.

CROSSROADS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. YARMUTH) for 2 minutes.

Mr. YARMUTH. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, this Congress is being called on to make some very critical

decisions. We are at a crossroads in this country and in the world.

You know, we are trying to make bold moves. President Obama has proposed a very bold agenda in the area of health care reform, energy and education, and we have taken up that cause in this Congress, and we are moving very decisively to make significant changes in this country.

From the other side, we hear reasonable questions: How much is this going to cost? What about the deficits we will be incurring? What about fiscal responsibility? Well, you know, there are two aspects to fiscal responsibility. One is living within your means. There's no question about that. We need to be able to do that. The other question is: How do you prepare for the future? If we are living within our means and are not willing to make the investments that we need to make, then the future is going to be very bleak, indeed.

You heard just a few minutes ago my colleague from California, Mr. COSTA, talking about the need to promote infrastructure, to invest in infrastructure and in the water supply in California. Well, this is just one microcosm of the challenge we will face across the country with bridges, roads, airports, air traffic controls, water systems, sewers. We need to make significant investments in all of those areas in order to provide the foundation, the infrastructure, for future growth, and we're going to have to borrow money to do that. Similarly, if we don't make the changes in our health care system and in our energy system and in our education, we will not have the human infrastructure that we need to move into the future.

You know, I've heard the minority leader on the other side say: How much is it going to cost to do health care reform? Well, I'm not sure, but we know how much it's going to cost not to do health care reform. We've seen the projections. Tens of trillions of dollars over the next 70 years in additional deficit are forecasted for Medicare. That's if we don't act. So we know what the cost of not acting is. It is time to act. It is the fiscally responsible thing to do to adopt the agenda of the Obama administration, and I look forward to being a part of that historic effort.

WORLD HEPATITIS DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. CASSIDY) for 2 minutes. Mr. CASSIDY. I thank you.

Today is World Hepatitis Day. This has special meaning for me because I'm a liver doctor, and I've spent 20 years treating hepatitis patients. Three to four million Americans have hepatitis, and about two-thirds of those folks are baby boomers. Maybe it has special meaning for me because I'm a baby boomer, but it also includes firemen, those affected at birth, Vietnam veterans, and many others who are affected by this disease. Indeed, almost

every person, almost every family is touched by someone who has liver diseases.

Every year in this country, thousands die from liver disease. We spend, roughly, \$30 billion a year treating liver disease, and many more are frightened, even though they shouldn't be, because they know the terrible statistics I just cited. Hepatitis doesn't affect people at the end of life, but rather, it can affect people in the primes of their lives. When it does so, it potentially leaves behind orphans, widows and widowers.

The best of the American spirit is compassion. Public policy should reflect this compassion, and in this case, it will be for our friends, our families and, in my case, my patients touched by hepatitis. Today, on World Hepatitis Day, I ask that we, through public policy, pledge our compassion to those so affected.

THE IMPORTANCE OF FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. PERRIELLO) for 5 minutes.

Mr. PERRIELLO. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise today as one of the younger Members of this body to speak out about the importance of fiscal responsibility. As one of those young enough who will take on much of the burden of the deficits created today, I speak out of the urgency of our considering future generations in the decades ahead as we look at this. It's certainly true that both political parties have much to answer for in terms of the deficits that have been run up, but it's also important that we do not embark on revisionist history and suggest moral equivalence between the sides.

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We must remember that the last administration walked into a situation where they had a \$5.6 trillion surplus—a \$5.6 trillion surplus—that they turned into a \$4.5 trillion deficit. That turnaround, you could hear future generations crying as that great opportunity to restore fiscal sanity was passed up and our national debt was doubled.

The Clinton administration and this body in the early 1990s took bold steps to get us on the path towards fiscal responsibility. We saw the same kind of bold leadership from the Democrats in my state, the Commonwealth of Virginia, when MARK WARNER came in as Governor, inheriting a huge deficit, and turning it into a surplus and making Virginia the best-managed State in the country. Governor Kaine moved in and continued that tradition, even under much more difficult economic times, of fiscal responsibility and sanity. So we know that this can be done because we have seen Democrats do it at the national level, and we have seen Democrats do it at the State level.

We have taken steps in this body to move in the right direction. I think the

budget should have gone further which is why I didn't support it. But let there be no doubt that we turned this ship around from unending deficits to cutting those deficits in more than half in the next 5 years. This is the decent thing to do. It is the right thing to do.

But in addition to the budget deficits that were run up in recent years, there was also a running up of a jobs deficit. We hear people talking now, worried suddenly about the jobs we could lose by getting in front of the energy economy. What about the jobs we have already lost? My colleague, Mr. CONNOLLY, has already spoken to how many millions of jobs have already gone overseas, good paying, advanced manufacturing jobs, engineering jobs, that could have been here if this body had the courage and the leadership to look forwards and not backwards.

Again, both parties have been part of trade deals that I think have been a bad bargain for the American worker. But let us have no doubt that there are those in this body now ready to have the courage to be ahead of the next big jobs boom and make sure that those next generation of jobs will be created here in the United States as we move towards a balanced budget, the kind of business climate where people want to locate and where we dare the American consumer and American business leaders to lead, to innovate, to create, to be at the forefront of that new energy economy.

This jobs deficit that has been created hand in hand with our budget deficit is one we can conquer. I believe we have taken great steps already in this Congress to put ourselves at the forefront of science, of research, of green energy. I come from an area of the country that has a great deal of pain right now. We have more than 20 percent unemployment in some of the towns in our districts as factories have gone overseas.

As we look at the possibility for alternative energies, energy efficiency technology, smart grid technology, advanced battery manufacturing, I believe our side has the courage to say America can do that better than anybody else. I believe southside Virginia can do that better than anyone else. But we will not get it by continuing the moral deficit we have had in our politics in recent years that puts the easy ahead of what is right. That puts partisan gains of right and left ahead of right and wrong.

The Democrats have a strong track record of fiscal responsibility in my State of Virginia and here in this body. We have begun a path that I hope we will continue to march down toward fiscal responsibility that will generate the jobs and the economic competitiveness that this country needs.

So I rise today hopeful and happy that we are part of that new change here to bring back and close in this time, to close the moral deficit, close the jobs deficit, and close the budget deficit and restore the kind of responsibility that future generations deserve.