

reactors we have today. But the proposal of the administration is to build 20 percent of our electricity from wind power. That would require 186,000 50-story wind turbines whose blades are the size of a football field. It would require 19,000 miles of new transmission lines from remote places, through your backyard, over your scenic viewscape, to bring that electricity to your house. It would require \$170 billion in taxpayer subsidies over the next 10 years, while the subsidy for the same amount of nuclear power would be about \$6.8 billion, according to current law.

It would turn our ridge tops and coastlines and treasured landscapes into junkyards in the sky. According to statistics from the American Bird Conservancy these turbines could kill more than 1 million birds a year. These turbines would work one-third of the time. That means we would have to build nuclear power natural gas plants, or coal plants, to back up these 186,000 turbines that would cover an area the size of West Virginia. That is a project for our country that ranges from impractical, to expensive, to preposterous, especially when we have available the possibility of doing what we did before—adding 100 new nuclear reactors, which the rest of the world is doing.

What happened to nuclear power? If we were going to war with the successful nuclear Navy created 60 years ago and it was doing exactly what we wanted it to do as the world's leading military, with thousands of our sailors living safely on top of those reactors, why would we stop building nuclear ships and start using sailboats for our national defense? That is tantamount to what the current administration's energy policy is doing with a national windmill policy.

We should build 100 new nuclear powerplants as rapidly and as safely as we can. It is the cheapest and most reliable way to reduce carbon and deal with climate change, and it is the fastest way to do that—just as electrifying half of our cars and trucks would be a fast way to reduce foreign oil and reduce emissions in the transportation sector. We invented nuclear power. It is one of our great technologies—maybe the most important technology in the last 100 years, and we haven't built a new nuclear powerplant in 30 years—even though the old ones we have are producing 70 percent of our carbon-free electricity.

What is the rest of the world doing? China is building 132 new nuclear powerplants. The head of a French company that makes large turbines for powerplants was in my office the other day. He told me China is starting a new nuclear plant every 2 to 3 months. France is 80 percent nuclear and has among the lowest electric rates and carbon emission rates in Western Europe.

We hear a lot about green jobs. Spain has a lot of green jobs. Unfortunately, many of the rest of Spain's jobs are

going to France because the electricity rates are lower in France, and they are high in Spain because they favor unreliable and expensive renewable electricity over nuclear power. Japan is 35 percent nuclear and growing. Taiwan, India, and the United Arab Emirates are building them. Russia is building two nuclear plants a year so they can use their natural gas as currency with the rest of Europe. But we invented nuclear technology and we haven't started a new nuclear powerplant in 30 years.

Why don't we go full speed ahead? We believe this is a more sensible, practical, low-cost solution for dealing with climate change. I will speak for myself; we have many different views on climate change in the Republican caucus. We have the whole spectrum. Not everybody agrees with me that it is a real problem and humans are causing it and we ought to deal with it as rapidly as we reasonably can. But here is the way we should do it.

If we, by 2030, build 100 new nuclear plants, and if we electrify half of our cars and trucks, we would be producing about 40 percent of our electricity from nuclear. Natural gas would be about 25 percent, hydro would be 10, wind and solar maybe 5 to 10. With these two efforts—nuclear power and electric cars—we would reach the Kyoto protocol goals for carbon emissions by 2030 without a significant increase in energy prices.

If in the meantime our mini-Manhattan projects for research, solar, carbon recapture, recycling nuclear waste, and electric batteries worked, we would be even more successful in reducing emissions, all without a national energy tax.

One might say: What is going to make all that happen? I would say two words: Presidential leadership. President Obama is very persuasive. He can set a goal and mobilize the country. That is part of the President's job: See a need, develop a strategy, and persuade half of us he is right. I think he can get a lot of Democrats.

He could start removing barriers to nuclear plants, speed up approval of designs for them. If China can start them every 2 or 3 months, we ought to be able to do so as well. He could provide incentives, such as \$100 billion in loan guarantees—and those would all be paid back not just for nuclear but for all clean energy. His budget could fund the mini-Manhattan projects. Dr. CHU has recommended we do that.

At a town hall meeting recently, President Obama said the United States would be “stupid”—those were his words—not to use nuclear power. I was glad to hear him say that. I was disappointed when he went to the United Nations Climate Change Conference in New York and lectured the other countries about not doing more about climate change and he didn't mention the words “nuclear power.” Meanwhile, Chinese President Hu Jintao said his country would “vigor-

ously” develop nuclear power to combat climate change and they are building 132 nuclear plants. But I was glad to hear what President Obama said in New Orleans.

As we move through the Senate on the debate on climate change, I ask colleagues on both sides to look carefully at this economy wide cap and trade. We have had some experience with cap and trade on small dollars for coal plants and sulfur. That does not translate very well to what is being proposed here. It does not work on fuel, which is 30 percent of our carbon. It raises the price without reducing carbon emissions, it drives manufacturing jobs away, and it raises utility bills. We don't need to do it.

With Presidential leadership, we could build 100 nuclear plants, electrify half our cars and trucks, find new low-carbon natural gas, launch the mini-Manhattan projects, and meet our clean energy goals without a national energy tax, without running jobs overseas looking for cheap electricity.

All 40 Republican Senators agree with this agenda. So do many Democrats. President Obama agrees with much of it. Then why are we pushing a high-cost national energy tax and subsidizing 186,000 windmills when we should all agree on a low-cost, clean energy plan that will create good jobs and power our economy for the 21st Century?

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FRANKEN). The Senator from Pennsylvania.

FOOD SECURITY

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, last week the United Nations Food Agency announced there are now a record 1 billion people in the world who go hungry—nearly one-sixth of the world's population. The crisis that caught the world's attention last year has escalated and has had a devastating effect in all corners of the globe.

On my left is a headline from the Associated Press from a few days ago: “A Record One Billion Are Hungry, U.N. Report Says.” This chart tracks from 1969 forward. We can see where it remained relatively stable for a while and then started to pick up in the early part of this decade, to the point now it is above 1 billion and is going in the wrong direction, going far too high—1 billion people in the world hungry.

While the number of undernourished has increased steadily since the 1990s, there was a sharp spike last year due to the global food crisis. We can work to address this problem, I believe. We should work to address this problem, and I believe we must work to address this problem.

Some people might say there is a bad economy in the United States. We have other major challenges and priorities. Why should we worry or address a problem that might seem too big to deal with and it is mostly about other places, they might argue.

We know what hunger has done here in America, what a lack of food security has done to our country. But we also know it has devastating impacts across the world.

There are at least two major reasons why the United States of America has to be deeply concerned about that headline of 1 billion people going hungry. First, it is a humanitarian crisis of incalculable proportions. As one of the richest countries in the world, we have, I believe, a moral obligation to help as we can and help when we can. I think this is one of those moments.

This crisis is solvable with a combination of assistance and emphasis on providing small farmers around the world with the know-how, the technology, and the means to provide for themselves.

There is also a second reason why we have to address this problem, and it involves something as fundamental as national security.

Instability arising from conflict over access to food is a documented and real problem. It is irrefutable based upon what we have seen in the last couple of years. Last year's food crisis, unfortunately, brought this into acute focus. We saw it in Somalia where struggles to gain access to food have enveloped population centers in violence. We have seen it in Egypt during last year's bread riots. And we have seen it in Haiti where hospital beds filled last year with those injured during food riots. Increased instability in any of these countries, not to mention so many others, has a direct impact on U.S. national security and our national interests.

There are a host of examples from across the world that illustrate the scope of the problem. Here are a few.

Higher rates of hunger are shown to be linked to gender inequality, especially in terms of education and literacy, which also negatively affects the rate of child malnutrition. It is estimated that 60 percent—imagine this—60 percent of the world's chronically hungry are women and girls. Sixty percent of those chronically hungry in the world are women and girls. And 20 percent of that 60 percent are children under the age of 5.

This is particularly evident in Chad which, according to the International Food Policy Research organization, ranks fifth worst on the 2009 global hunger index, second in terms of gender inequality, and has a female literacy rate of 13 percent, compared to 41 percent for men in that country.

IFPR's research shows that equalizing men and women's status could reduce the number of malnourished children in Chad by 1.7 million people in sub-Saharan Africa and a shocking 13.4 million in South Asia.

It goes beyond the one example in Chad. Hunger in Pakistan poses both problems. It poses both a humanitarian problem as well as a security problem. Last year, over 77 million people in Pakistan were considered "food inse-

cure" by the World Food Program. That is nearly half of the population of that country. As Pakistan's military is conducting new operations against the Taliban, that number is expected to increase. Hunger and competition for food can lead to further instability and potentially undermine government leadership at a very critical time.

Finally, the last example. In South America, Bolivia remains one of the least developed countries with more than two-thirds of its population living below the poverty line. Poverty is the main cause of food insecurity in Bolivia. The income of 40 percent of its population and 59 percent in rural areas is not enough to meet basic food needs. This also has had a real impact on the health of the population. Malnutrition, for example, in Bolivia has stunted the growth of nearly 30 percent of children.

What should be done to address this urgent humanitarian and national security crisis? A couple of things. First, for too long, the international community has relied on an assistance model that provided food but not the capacity to grow food. We are starting to see a shift in thinking as the assistance community is more strategic about how they provide the training and technical assistance necessary to help the world's hungry.

In 1980—another stunning number that I recite here—17 percent of aid contributed by foreign countries went to agriculture. This number plummeted to 3.8 percent in 2006 and has only slightly improved in recent years. Imagine that: The percent of aid contributed by foreign countries that goes to agriculture was 17 percent worldwide but has now gone down to a little less than 4 percent.

Last year, the Bush administration responded quickly to the food crisis with emergency assistance. I was proud to be part of an effort to urge them to do that along with Senator DURBIN and others. This was an important thing to do at the time and it was the right thing to do. While we may need to provide additional emergency aid to address the current crisis, we should simultaneously attack the root cause of the problems.

I applaud President Obama and his administration for their efforts to help the hungry in America and across the world. In September, the White House announced the Global Hunger and Food Security Initiative, a comprehensive approach to food security based on a commitment, led by people in the administration, that focuses on both planning and collaboration. Secretary of State Clinton is leading a visionary "whole of government" effort to help the world's hungry. As the administration works out the details of implementation, I hope and trust we will maintain a sharp focus on the ability of small-scale farmers to grow food at an increased and sustainable rate.

In the Senate, we have also worked to bring attention to the world's hun-

gry. Senator LUGAR, a respected leader in this field for decades, and I joined together to introduce the Global Food Security Act earlier this year.

Our bill has three fundamental objectives. First, the bill will provide for enhanced coordination within the U.S. Government so that USAID, the Department of Agriculture, and other involved entities are not working at cross-purposes. We do that by establishing a new position, the Special Coordinator for Food Security, who will report directly to the President of the United States on international food security issues and who would forge a comprehensive food security strategy.

Second, our bill would expand U.S. investment in the agricultural productivity of developing nations so that nations facing escalating food prices can rely less on emergency food assistance and instead take the steps to expand their own production.

Every dollar invested in agricultural research and development generates \$9 worth of food in the developing world. This provision can serve as a vehicle for the President's pledge to more than double the U.S. agricultural development assistance over the next 3 years.

Third, our bill would modernize our system of emergency food assistance so that it is more flexible and can provide aid on short notice. We do that by authorizing a new \$500 million fund for U.S. emergency food assistance when appropriate.

Finally, we should note that our bill, the Global Food Security Act, has passed through our Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and we hope it will be on the Senate floor soon.

This is one of those rare occasions where a serious crisis is greeted with serious administration support, inter-agency cooperation, as well as—we don't hear this too often—bipartisan collaboration in the Senate and House. This is the right thing to do and will ultimately enhance the security of the United States and our allies.

The global food crisis last summer had a devastating effect on the poor in every corner of the world, and today we continue to see its terrible results. In times of economic troubles, it is difficult to find funds for all programs, including international affairs. Yet I believe we are summoned by our conscience to respond to this humanitarian crisis.

I also believe we have an obligation—a deep abiding obligation—to strengthen our national security by enhancing food security here at home and around the world, especially in places where food insecurity threatens U.S. national interests.

If enacted, the Global Food Security Act has the potential to help us meet these challenges and obligations. We have a plan that can work. Let's start to attack the roots of this terrible problem so another record number of hungry is not set next year, and let's hope we can somehow alter or change that headline of 1 billion people going hungry in the world.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SENATE HOLD ON GSA NOMINEE

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, earlier today, apparently, our distinguished majority leader came to the floor and noted that a nomination for GSA—made on the opening day of Major League Baseball season—still remains unconfirmed for the job and said it was “because a Republican Senator is demanding a Federal building is built in his home State.”

Obviously, I am that Senator. I thank the good Senator from Nevada for raising that question because I and a bipartisan group of Members of Congress and the leaders of the Kansas City area have been working with the GSA for the past several weeks to resolve the concerns I have and get some questions answered on a project very important to the Kansas City community.

Our conversations have amazingly become very productive, and the GSA has assured me they will have information to share very shortly. Unfortunately, until I put this hold on the nominee, progress was not quite so quick. But I expect the issue to be resolved shortly, in what I hope is a matter of a couple days, to the benefit of the GSA and certainly to the benefit of the Kansas City greater community.

Let me point out one other thing before leaving the floor. The community of Kansas City—all of the leadership, the elected officials and others—had gone together to work with the GSA to get a building—a new building—to replace an existing building, which by any stretch of the imagination is extremely expensive, is partly occupied, and is not conducive to good work, as a good workplace, and it needs to be replaced. We had gone all the way through, gotten GSA approval and gotten to OMB. Then it was held up in the Senate. After all the financing had been committed to construct a building on a lease-to-own basis, they decided to pull the plug.

The Commissioner of Public Buildings has assured me that the existing facility is not a fit place for the workers to work. So I had asked and inquired of GSA and advised them that Kansas City needs to know what the plans are. As I say, our bipartisan congressional delegation is now receiving great cooperation, and we are working hard to get this resolved. We hope to do that shortly.

I also want to point to the fact that, according to a report in governmentexecutive.com, delay on this nom-

ination reaches back long before my informational hold, which occurred in late July. Since Senator REID suggested the nomination has been pending since April, it raises the question: Why wasn't she approved in April, May, June or July, prior to my informational hold? That was a period during which the baseball season started and stretched long past the All-Star break.

According to governmentexecutive.com, the delay was because of concerns by Senator REID that GSA allow Federal employees to travel to Las Vegas to meet, gamble or whatever one does in Vegas. It is important to the Federal employees in Kansas City that they have a building that has a roof that doesn't leak—a proposition of which GSA concurs. Senator REID apparently wants Federal employees to be able to visit Las Vegas, and certainly I want Federal employees to have a good place to work. Senator REID has his priorities regarding the delay on this nomination and I have mine. He wants more people in Las Vegas; I want to get the building that had been promised and was expected by the Federal employees in Kansas City.

Assuming the report in governmentexecutive.com is accurate, I wish to make sure it is clear to the Senate that the delay in approval of this nomination has more than one father and is truly bipartisan.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a copy of the article to which I referred.

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

[From Congress Daily, Sept. 14, 2009]

SENATE MAJORITY LEADER SLOWS ACTION ON GSA NOMINEE

(By Dan Friedman)

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., has missed few chances to complain about blocked executive nominations, regularly ripping Republicans for holds that he said are designed to limit floor time for Democratic legislation.

On Thursday, for example, Reid faulted Republican “stalling tactics” for forcing a cloture vote before the confirmation of Cass Sunstein to head OMB's Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs. In a June floor speech, he blasted Republicans for placing holds on more than 20 nominations.

But multiple Democratic and Republican staffers say Reid himself slowed action on one of the highest-ranking nominees awaiting confirmation, Martha Johnson. She is President Obama's pick to head the General Services Administration.

Johnson, a former GSA chief of staff, cannot start her job until she is confirmed, a GSA spokeswoman said.

Reid is keen to promote travel to Nevada, where he faces a tough re-election fight next year. Aides said he delayed confirmation of Johnson while seeking assurances that the agency, which oversees federal travel policy, did not discourage federal employees from traveling to Las Vegas for business conferences.

Johnson's nomination cleared the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee in June, and drew no GOP objections when it was circulated to all Sen-

ate offices. But a Democrat apparently held up the nomination and prevented a floor vote, Senate staffers from both parties said.

“We later learned that Reid has expressed some concerns about travel,” said a senior Republican aide. “He had some concerns about that and was using the Martha Johnson nomination as leverage with the White House and GSA.”

The aide said Reid did not place a technical hold, which would not be needed since the majority leader controls the floor schedule.

“It is not accurate to say that Sen. Reid had a hold on the nomination. . . . It is typical practice that a nomination is reviewed once it is received,” a Democratic leadership aide familiar with the matter said. “There were a couple of issues that needed clarification on the nomination.”

Reid has touted his concern about agencies limiting travel to Las Vegas. In an exchange of letters in July, he asked White House Chief of Staff Rahm Emanuel to ensure federal agencies do not prohibit travel to Las Vegas and other conference destinations that “are considered too leisure oriented.” On July 27 he sent a letter asking federal agencies not to limit travel to any specific U.S. cities.

After Reid's concerns were resolved, Sen. Christopher (Kit) Bond, R-Mo., placed his own hold on the nomination last month because of concerns about delays in a federal construction project in Kansas City. Bond has met with Johnson, but is continuing the hold while waiting for further information from the nominee, a spokesman said.

Mr. BOND. I thank the Chair. I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, are we in morning business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Yes.

Mr. BURR. I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business for 20 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SECOND AMENDMENT RIGHTS OF VETERANS

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to talk about an issue I have been working on for 2 years—namely, ending the arbitrary process through which our own government takes away the second amendment rights of veterans. Let me briefly describe what I mean about this issue.

As most of my colleagues know, the Federal Gun Control Act prohibits the sale of firearms to certain individuals, including convicted felons, fugitives, drug users, illegal aliens, and individuals who have been “adjudicated as a mental defective.” Furthermore, the Gun Control Act prohibits possession of firearms by any of these classified individuals. Needless to say, it is a serious matter. Criminal prosecution is