

sooner Congress realizes change requires a cultural shift in both parties, the sooner that change will come.

I would like to spend a moment outlining a few components of this bill. We have not actually gotten to see the bill, but I have been told by the majority leader that we have added, I think, 12 or 13 other bills to it. But from what we have known in the past, let me go through and explain to the American public what is in this bill.

The national parks today face a severe shortage of money to maintain them at their current level. It is about \$9.8 billion. In this bill we add four new national parks. The U.S. Arizona Memorial in Hawaii is sinking. The visitors center is sinking. We haven't put the money in to repair it, but yet we are going to create more national parks that will further dilute the maintenance budget of the National Park Service so we can't even maintain what we have. We have a \$700 million backlog just on The National Mall in Washington. We didn't address any of that in terms of the priority of fixing that. Yet we are going to add four new national parks.

We are going to add 10 new heritage areas. It is great for us to protect and think about the environment. But we never talk about how that impacts property rights, one of the rights given to us as our Nation was created. We are going to threaten that area. We are going to threaten through eminent domain. We are going to threaten through councils that will impact individual ownership of what you can do with your own property because you might be in proximity to a heritage area. We have 14 studies that would create or expand future national parks; in other words, 14 more. That is what we are funding in this bill. We don't have the money to take care of the parks we have today, but yet we are going to put into this and spend money to potentially create 14 more.

There are 17 provisions in this bill that will totally prohibit any exploration, oil extraction, coal extraction, natural gas extraction from 2.98 million acres in this country, many of which have proven reserves underlying. There are 53 rivers that are designated or portions of which are designated as scenic rivers. We have a great scenic river in Oklahoma called the Illinois. I am glad it is a scenic river. But with scenic river designation comes a trampling on the rights of people who are far away from it. We didn't change scenic rivers designation in light of our energy needs. Once a river is designated a scenic river and we need to move natural gas or a coal slurry or oil from point A to point B, we are totally prohibited from ever doing that on a scenic river. So it is another strike at any sort of increasing in our independence on energy because we are going to designate scenic rivers. Why not designate scenic rivers with an option to make sure we don't handcuff ourselves when it comes to energy?

There are 65 new Federal wilderness areas. Here is an important matter we came across as we studied this bill. In the United States today, right now, before this bill, there are 107 million acres of wilderness. All the developed land—cities, suburbs, towns—across the whole rest of the country is only 106 million acres. We are going to be adding to that and limiting our opportunity to the resources we have.

There are 1,082 pages in the bill. I understand it is now 1,200 pages. There are 1.2 million acres in Wyoming that are withdrawn from mineral leasing and exploration. There are 1.93 million acres of Federal wilderness land. There are 3 million additional acres withdrawn from leasing and energy exploration. There are 331 million barrels of oil that we know are there and we are never going to take. We are just going to help those who drive up our energy costs because we are going to know it is there but we can't touch it because we are going to make it off-limits. There are 592 spending and 15 new State and local water projects. There is nothing wrong with State and local water projects, as long as they are a priority, but these are earmarked, specific projects for specific Members. There is \$10 billion of total spending money we don't have. We are going to borrow it.

There are 8.8 trillion cubic feet of natural gas that we know is there that we will never touch. What the Department of Interior tells us is there is much more there, but these are the proven reserves.

I will end my conversation, only to be continued in a more thorough manner as the bill actually comes to the floor by asking the American public: What would they hope we would do in terms of trying to change, trying to meet what they see as the problems in front of us? Would it be that we would be about passing things that are small but make us look good that we can't pay for or would it be that we should attend and address the pressing and also long-term needs of the country?

It is about trust. The reason we have a 9-percent approval rating is because we are not trusted. We are addicts. We are self-indulgent addicts over our power.

My query to the body and to the American people is, will you hold us accountable? You have to do an intervention with us, each one of us, every time we are home: Are you being a good steward with the limited dollars we have? Are you making choices that may not look good for you as a politician but are truly the best choice for the country? Are you putting yourself second and our country first? Are you acting as a statesman or are you acting as somebody who wants to get re-elected?

The real paradox is, with trust comes confidence. With that confidence comes the involvement and support of the very people we actually do represent.

We have a choice. I hope the introduction of this bill does not portend

that we will not take President-elect Obama's lead and offer the American people real hope, real change, that we will get away from our addicted self-indulgence to look good at home and start making the hard, tough decisions that will right our ship and put our country first. Anything less than that says the people who took their oath today and those of us who have taken it before, we violate it. We raise our hand and put one on the Bible and say we will uphold it, but then when it comes to the first tough choice, look good at home or do what is in the long-term best interests of the country, we swivel, we back down, and we opt for the short term, the self-aggrandizement, and the stroke on our own back. We are better than that. The people in this body are better than that.

My hope is we can prove to the American people over the next 6 to 9 months that we got the message, that it is about making the tough choices. It is about doing what is right in the long term. It is not about what makes us or our party look good; it is about what is best for the country as a whole.

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

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

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I would raise objection to the filing of the bill at the desk, the Bingaman land package.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

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

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

TRIBUTE TO CHARLES KIEFFER

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I rise today to commend and congratulate one of the best and brightest gentlemen I have ever had the privilege of employing. That man is Mr. Charles Kieffer who has served as staff director of the Senate Appropriations Committee for the last 2 years, and as deputy staff director for 6 years prior to that.

Chuck Kieffer is a marvel of intelligence, wisdom, tact, coolness, and an extraordinary knowledge of appropriations and budget matters. He is personable, polite, and a pleasure to work with. He has been invaluable to me, to the leadership of the Senate, and to all

the members of the Senate Appropriations Committee. In a time of continual wrangling over the appropriations process, tight budgets, veto threats, and differences between the House and Senate, Chuck has been a steady leader and a working dynamo. We have been extremely fortunate to have the right man as staff director in very difficult times.

Chuck also serves as the chief clerk of the Homeland Security Subcommittee which funds the agencies that merged to form this cabinet level department. In the aftermath of September 11, Chuck provided key advice and direction about the wisest ways to protect against future terrorist attacks and address the staggering destruction in New York State and at the Pentagon. He has worn the two hats of staff director of the full Appropriations Committee and clerk of the Homeland Security Subcommittee, which I continue to chair, with grace and with ease.

This really should come as no surprise. Despite his youth and unassuming demeanor, Chuck has served five Presidents, beginning with President Carter.

Before he joined my Appropriations staff, Chuck worked at the Office of Management and Budget during the Reagan, George H.W. Bush, Clinton, and George W. Bush administrations.

In 1978 Chuck began his government service as a Presidential management intern at the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. From 1978–1985 he served as a budget analyst for the Department of Health and Human Services. From 1985–1990 Mr. Kieffer was special assistant to the Director of the Office of Management and Budget. From 1990–1995, he served as chief appropriations analyst for the Office of Management and Budget, and from 1995–2001 he was acting associate director of legislative affairs at the OMB until he joined my staff as deputy staff director of the Appropriations Committee in 2001. In 2001, Chuck Kieffer won the Robert G. Damas Public Service Award.

As I step aside as chairman of the Appropriations Committee in the coming days, I am thankful that Chuck has agreed to stay by my side as the chief clerk of the subcommittee on Homeland Security. We can all sleep a little more soundly knowing that such a talented person as Chuck Kieffer is helping to adequately and effectively fund the Department charged with keeping Americans safe from harm here at home.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF SENATOR BYRD'S SWEARING IN

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, today we begin the 111th Congress. As it is every two years, this is a moment for new beginnings, but also an opportunity to bid farewell to some dear friends of ours as they move on to the next chapters in their remarkable lives.

While it is always a joy to see this moment—to see the pride visible in not only the Members' faces, but their families' as well—this year's is especially poignant for me.

Each of the men and women who have taken this oath during my time in this institution has made an impression on me—influencing my life, my work—in one way or another.

But 50 years ago this week, two Members were sworn in—one who is here today and another who remains here in spirit—each of whom had a singularly important impact on me:

My father, Thomas Dodd, who represented my State of Connecticut, and our esteemed colleague and friend from West Virginia, ROBERT C. BYRD.

I was only a boy then, but I remember that moment as if it were yesterday, seated with my family in the gallery above, as we looked down on my father, as he began what would turn out to be the final chapter in a public life—a life that had already taken him from Norwich, CT, to Washington, DC, as an FBI agent and lawyer at the Department of Justice; to Germany where he served as a prosecutor at the famous Nuremberg Trials, before returning to our Nation's Capital to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Fifty years later, I take no small amount of pride in noting that in each of these endeavors, my father proved to be ahead of his time—an advocate for universal health care, a proponent of sensible gun safety laws, an early voice warning of the effects of violence on TV and the dangers of drug addiction; and an insistent defender of those whose human rights were being denied.

Indeed, it would not take long before a fellow freshman made his own mark, becoming not only this body's President pro tempore and the longest-serving Member in its history, but the undisputed master of this body's arcane parliamentary procedures, an award-winning author and historian and the foremost champion of sunlight in government.

Today, as the whole world watches these historic moments, we should note that it was ROBERT BYRD who staved off the threat that the Senate might become “the invisible branch of government” by ensuring that our proceedings be televised.

Some two-and-half decades ago, when I was sworn in myself, it was my colleague from West Virginia who handed me a small book—a pocket-sized Constitution. For all I know, he did this for every freshman Senator.

His message was simple: as a Member of the Senate, you are a temporary custodian of this document.

And so, I kept that book. For 28 years, I have carried it with me in my back pocket—Saturday, Sunday, every day of the week to remind myself how important this document is, the values and the principles that are incorporated in it.

Senator BYRD has put it better than anyone: “The limits that the Constitu-

tion places on how political power is exercised have ensured our freedom for more than two centuries.”

Each of these men taught me, in different ways, that we cannot defend and protect the vision of the Framers if we are ignorant of the Constitution's history and the rule of law.

And so today, as we look forward to the 111th Congress and all that we hope to achieve, may we also remember this gift that was given to all of us in the 86th Congress all those years ago. May it continue to shine for many, many more.

IDAHOANS SPEAK OUT ON HIGH ENERGY PRICES

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, in mid-June, I asked Idahoans to share with me how high energy prices are affecting their lives, and they responded by the hundreds. The stories, numbering well over 1,200, are heartbreaking and touching. While energy prices have dropped in recent weeks, the concerns expressed remain very relevant, particularly in light of our economic times. To respect the efforts of those who took the opportunity to share their thoughts, I am submitting every e-mail sent to me through an address set up specifically for this purpose to the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. This is not an issue that will be easily resolved, but it is one that deserves immediate and serious attention, and Idahoans deserve to be heard. Their stories not only detail their struggles to meet everyday expenses, but also have suggestions and recommendations as to what Congress can do now to tackle this problem and find solutions that last beyond today. I ask unanimous consent to have today's letters printed in the RECORD.

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

My wife and I are retired with fixed retirement incomes and our IRAs and annuities. We live about six miles from Moscow. We are now limiting our trips to town and will reduce/eliminate the travel we had planned this summer. We use our Ford 500 that gets about 29MPG instead of our pickup as much as possible. Our home is heated with wood pellets, but we wonder if wood pellets will be available next fall because of the failing timber industry.

We have little hope that gas prices will decrease. Both of the Presidential candidates have bought into the global warming hoax and do not want to develop our oil resources. We expected it of the Democrat candidate but are very disappointed in John McCain's position. It is difficult to believe that he thinks the liberal environmental industry will vote for him because he claims to be an “environmentalist”.

We feel that [the candidates] should visit ANWR and see that it is not like the Grand Canyon. It is a frozen desert where the oil resource could be developed with little impact. We encourage you to help change positions on oil development. [Our country] will miss a golden opportunity if they do not use the “drill here, drill now, pay less” position. Thank you for asking for our opinion.

NED and ARLEEN, *Moscow.*