

empowering them to take a more active role with patients. They are able to work with both patients and family caregivers. For too long, family caregivers have been "silent partners." Some 50 million Americans provide care for a chronically ill, disabled or aged loved one. This bill recognizes their importance, connecting them with a coach who can teach them how to properly coordinate at-home care.

This bill is only a small part of the solution to the complex challenges of our fragmented health care system. The problems of rising costs and limited access affect people from all walks of life.

Skip Guarini of Parker, CO, is a self-employed private consultant and retired U.S. Marine. After years of regular doctors' visits, Skip's dentist discovered a lump on his thyroid during a routine exam that had gone undetected by his physician despite 10 previous exams.

Skip underwent a CT/MRI scan, ultrasound, and biopsy, all of which were inconclusive. A second series of tests 6 months later revealed that the lump had grown, and Skip underwent surgery. During the surgery, doctors found cancer. Skip was then sent to an endocrinologist who ordered more tests. All tests came back negative. A second full body scan revealed no sign of cancer anywhere in Skip's body.

All these exams and screenings cost Skip \$122,000.

Since then, Skip has maintained perfect health, but he cannot obtain private insurance because of the thyroid surgery. He now relies on COBRA and is paying a monthly premium of \$1,300. This coverage is set to expire in less than 1 year, at which point Skip will have no insurance.

Hollis Berendt is a small business owner in Greeley, CO. She is covered through her husband's employer, which is "a luxury many other small business owners don't have," she said.

After graduating from Colorado State University in 2004, their daughter Abby found a job with a large company in New York City. She was told she could not get health care coverage until she had been working for the company 1 year. At 10 months of employment, she was diagnosed with an ovarian tumor that would require surgery. The expenses were too much for Abby, so her parents had to take out a second mortgage to pay her medical bills.

Hollis shared that "this experience brought to light, all too clearly, how close we all are to losing everything due to a health issue."

The current system is hurting our small business people and their employees. Take Bob Montoya of Pueblo, CO, who runs Cedar Ridge Landscape in Pueblo with his brother Ron. They are torn between providing health care coverage for employees and keeping the business afloat.

Last year, the business paid out \$36,000 for a health care plan to cover

Bob and Ron's families and one other employee. The other 12 employees and their families do not get coverage through their work. Bob said, "As business owners, we want to do right by the people who work for us, but if all our employees opted into our health care plan and paid their 50 percent, we would be forced out of business."

He said it is an "impossible situation" for him and his employees.

Like too many small business owners, Bob can not find good health care coverage at a cost he can afford.

He said, "The longer it takes to pass comprehensive health care reform, the more jobs will be lost as small businesses shut their doors due to rising costs."

These Coloradans speak for countless others across the nation. All they ask for is a health care system that works for them, a health care system that does not crush them with unreasonable costs, and a health care system that does not deny them coverage just because they have pre-existing conditions. I am hopeful.

I am hopeful that we can keep what works in our system and fix what is broken. I am hopeful that this Congress, working with our President, will finally deliver on the promise of health care reform. The people of Colorado deserve it. The American people deserve it.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KAUFMAN.) The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. 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. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I understand we are in morning business. I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 20 minutes.

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

OFFSHORE DRILLING

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, the Senate Energy Committee has just approved an energy bill that adopted a very controversial amendment that would allow oil to be drilled 10 miles off of the coast of Florida.

I wish to refer to this chart. Here is the peninsula of Florida. This is the panhandle of Florida, including Pensacola, Fort Walton Beach, Panama City, and Cape San Blas. Some of our largest military installations in America are here: the Pensacola Naval Air Station, the big complex of the Air Force, Eglin Air Force Base in that area of Fort Walton Beach. Down here in Panama City is Tyndall Air Force Base, where they are training all of the F-22 pilots. As one can see on this map, the rest of the gulf coast of the United States includes Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and then Texas.

This chart illustrates what the Dorgan amendment does to Florida. It shows the western planning area of the gulf, the central planning area, and what is known as the eastern planning area. The chart shows that in legislation we passed in 2006, a compromise was struck whereby the oil industry could drill in an additional 8.3 million acres, in addition to the 33 million acres they have under lease in the central and western gulf—33 million that they have under lease that they had not drilled. We worked out an additional 8.3 million acres in this tan area called lease sale 181. In exchange, the compromise was for the protection of the Gulf of Mexico, everything east of this longitude line known as the military mission line. Why? Because everything east of this line is the largest testing and training area for the U.S. military in the world. It is where we are training our F-22 pilots out of Tyndall Air Force Base, it is where we are training our Navy pilots in Pensacola, and it is where we are testing some of the most sophisticated weapons systems in the world that are under the test and evaluation component of Eglin Air Force Base.

This is the area. It is also where we are training our Navy squadrons at Key West Naval Air Station. They will send in a squadron down here to Key West, and when they lift off from the Boca Chica runway, within 2 minutes they are over protected airspace. So they don't have a lot of travel time. They don't spend a lot of gas getting to their training area, which is out here. So we see that we have this area that is now protected.

I wish to have printed in the RECORD a letter from the Secretary of Defense—and this is actually from the previous Secretary of Defense, Secretary Rumsfeld—in which he says the use of this for oil and gas production would be incompatible with the needs of the U.S. military in this test and training area.

I ask unanimous consent to have this letter printed in the RECORD, if I may.

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

THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE,
Washington, DC, November 30, 2005.

Hon. JOHN WARNER,
Chairman, Committee on Armed Services, Russell Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your letter of October 7, 2005, concerning the potential effect of Department of Interior-administered oil and gas leasing on military training and readiness in the Eastern Gulf of Mexico. The Department of Defense (DoD) fully supports the national goal of exploration and development of our nation's offshore oil and gas resources. The DoD, the Department of the Interior, and affected states have worked together successfully for many years to ensure unrestricted access to critical military testing and training areas, while also enabling oil and gas exploration in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

DoD conducts essential military testing and training in many of the 26 Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) planning areas. Prior

analysis and existing agreements with Interior recognize that areas east of the 86° 41' line in the Gulf of Mexico (commonly known as the "Military Mission Line") are especially critical to DoD due to the number and diversity of military testing and training activities conducted there now, and those planned for the future. In those areas east of the Military Mission Line, drilling structures and associated development would be incompatible with military activities, such as missile flights, low-flying drone aircraft, weapons testing, and training.

As the planning process for Interior's new 5-year OCS oil and gas leasing program proceeds, DoD will continue both to evaluate its military requirements and to work with Interior to ensure the 2007–2012 oil and gas program, and any future lease sales resulting from it, strike the proper balance between our nation's energy and national security goals.

Sincerely,

DONALD RUMSFELD.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, here is what people don't understand. The committee that adopted this amendment, 13 to 10, doesn't realize this is the largest testing and training area for the U.S. military. That is why in the legislation in law we protect everything east of that line that we passed 3 years ago. In return, we gave the oil boys an additional 8.3 million acres in lease sale 181 and lease sale 181 south. That, by the way, is in addition to their 33 million acres they have under lease here, and here, as shown on this map, that they have not drilled.

Why do the oil companies want to have this additional lease area when, in fact, they have a lot of leases they haven't drilled—33 million acres plus another 8 million acres? Well, it is because a lease has a legal value. If there is estimated to be any oil or gas there, that has a value, and those leases then become a part of the assets of the company, which increases the value of the company, which, of course, then makes their stock worth more. But what we struck in the compromise 3 years ago that everybody out here on this Senate floor agreed to—agreed to, I might say, with Senator MARTINEZ and me—was in exchange for getting that additional area, they would leave the military mission test and evaluation and training area alone.

In the last round of BRAC, which is the Base Realignment and Closure Commission, the "r" of BRAC stands for realignment. Is it any wonder that in that round of evaluating military bases they decided to send all the pilot training for the new stealth fighter—the F-22—that they brought it here to Tyndall Air Force base at Panama City? Why? Because they have that area.

Listen, this fighter does a dog fight at 1.5 Mach, twice what an F-16 and an F-15 does a dog fight at. They are doing a dog fight, doing tight turns at about .75 Mach. The new F-22 stealth fighter will go into and engage another aircraft at 1.5 Mach. When you do turns at twice the speed of an F-15 and F-16, you have a much wider radius of a

turn. That is why they need all that area. When they are dropping on targets, they are dropping live ordnance.

When we are testing long-range weapons systems at Eglin Air Force Base—some that we release from airplanes, some that are shot from ships—we need hundreds of miles of range. That is why the operative policy of the Department of Defense is that you can't have oil rigs out here to interfere with national security preparation, but, apparently, that is not the way 13 Members of the Senate Energy Committee understood this argument.

Now there is another argument. By the way, I might point out that in that realignment of the bases, they are bringing into Eglin Air Force base all the pilot training for the new F-35. That is the Joint Strike Fighter that is still being developed, but that will be coming out within the next few years. That is the Joint Strike Fighter for the Navy, the Marines, and the Air Force. That Joint Strike Fighter will be sold to some of our allies.

Where is the pilot training? Right here because of the restrictions, it being a test, a training, and an evaluation area. That is why the U.S. military brought these new assets into this area.

There is another reason now that I get so exercised about this, other than the fact of the agreements that were set, that were agreed to; the compromises that were struck 3 years ago are now being abrogated.

That is, they now bring oil rig leasing within 10 miles of the world's most beautiful beaches. There are not too many Americans who don't know that the beaches running from Pensacola all the way through Panama City to Mexico Beach are some of the world's most beautiful beaches. They are sugary white sand, and people from all over go to enjoy this extraordinary valuable resource. It is God's way of giving us a blessing on Earth that people enjoy when they want to go to the beach.

Can you imagine, what the Energy Committee has passed, allowing oil rigs 10 miles off the world's most beautiful beaches? Environmentally, that is one thing, but let's look at the economy of Florida. The economy of Florida—we are a peninsula. We have more coastline than any other State, save Alaska, but Alaska doesn't have a lot of beaches. We have more beaches than almost—not almost—than any other State. Is it any wonder we want to protect our economy, which is a \$60 billion-a-year tourism industry, particularly at a time when the economy is being savaged as much as it is?

Yet the Senate Energy Committee would say they are not only going to ignore the military tests and training range that has been off-limits in the law, but now they are going to run rigs up to 10 miles offshore and threaten those sugary white beaches.

Well, let me tell you a few points about this wise energy policy they have supposedly adopted. We all know

increased domestic drilling is not going to decrease U.S. dependence on foreign oil. That has been shown over and over. Why? Because if there was oil there, you are not going to get it into production for 10 years. So using the scare tactics of the gas prices going up and up doesn't do a bit for decreasing U.S. dependence on foreign oil and helping gas prices. But let's say it would. Even though bad oil spills and shipping accidents take place, let's say, for a moment, the technological innovations now have made all drilling operations safe; and if the United States wishes to remain dependent on oil, well, shouldn't we drill anywhere we can find oil? How about Colorado for oil shale? But, oh, no, that is off-limits.

How about the five Great Lakes? They should have plenty of black gold. But, no, that is off-limits. How about the oil-rich Arctic National Wildlife Refuge? That is off-limits. This Senator has supported keeping that off-limits. No, the reality is that, instead, some of my colleagues in the Senate want to come—it is kind of like: don't tax you, don't tax me, go tax that "fella" under the tree. They want to go and hit somebody else. They want to cut the heart and the lungs out of the U.S. military testing area. They want to come in and start fouling up the most beautiful beaches in the world, the northwest Florida coast.

Three years ago, we opened that additional 8.3 million acres. We didn't allow any drilling any closer than 100 miles off Pensacola, 125 miles off Panama City, 237 miles off Tampa Bay, and over 300 miles off Naples. Why are some people pushing to change this so soon after that compromise that was struck 3 years ago? It is the oil industry, that is why. The oil industry has those 33 million acres out here in the central and western gulf. It is leased, it is not being drilled, but that is not enough for them. Even though the industry hand-picked areas opened here in the 2006 compromise, it now feels it can make more of a profit by drilling closer to Florida's coast.

I don't think we should have to trash our coastline and our economy and the U.S. military so big oil can increase its profit margin. There are serious national security implications if this were to become law. I wish to show you something else. Look at this picture. This is a beach in Pinellas County, Florida after an oil spill. You know what that is—that is oil mixing with white, sugary, powdery, white sand.

Drilling 10 miles off the coast of Florida would destroy the economy of the Nation's fourth largest State. It would convert Florida's world-class beaches to an industrial coastline. We would trade the world's top beaches and the tourist attractions for an industrial waste line dotted with transmission pipes, storage tanks, and oil rigs. We would take away the U.S. military's last unfettered testing and training range—and take it away during a time of war.

Supporters of opening the eastern gulf say we need to do it to help get America off foreign oil. Tell me, then, why isn't there a clause in the drilling amendment passed specifying that all oil and natural gas that would be produced in the eastern gulf has to stay in the United States for domestic consumption?

But, no, that is not there because, the truth is, any oil that would be drilled could be sent to any other country in the world, reducing our use of foreign oil not by one single drop.

If we wish to reduce our dependence on foreign oil—and you have heard me say this ad infinitum—we need to increase our use of alternative energy, energy-efficient cars and appliances.

Mr. President, is my time coming to a close?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Yes.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. I ask unanimous consent to proceed for an additional 5 minutes.

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

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Recently, we have seen how gas prices have started to rise. Why? Last year, the price of oil went up to \$147 a barrel. Why, in 1 day, did the price of oil rise \$37 for a barrel of oil? It is because those greedy speculators on unregulated futures commodities markets had been able to bid up crude oil prices in part due to a legal loophole, called the Enron loophole, which, in effect, unleashed insider trading similar to condo flipping since 2001.

Some Gulf Coast States, such as Louisiana, have embraced drilling. Congress even agreed to prop them up with revenue sharing. But because Louisiana doesn't have beaches—or has beaches that are left such as this one in the picture—and they don't have a tourism economy like Florida's, it isn't worth the risk to the jobs and the revenue and the economy of Florida.

Florida's Gulf Coast has some of the most beautiful beaches in the world. These beaches account for a substantial portion of the \$60 billion-a-year tourism economy.

Would you visit a beach with oil operations along its shores? Would you want to go to a beach that looks like this photo? I'll tell you a little more about it. This photo is of a relatively small oil spill that occurred as a result of a shipping accident in Pinellas County, FL, in 1993. It simply doesn't make sense to jeopardize Florida's tourism industry and put the coastline at risk of ending up like this.

I will close by reading a timely editorial that appeared in today's St. Petersburg Times. That is one of Florida's largest newspapers. This was so poignant I think it is worth me inserting it into the RECORD, which I will.

I ask unanimous consent that the entire article be printed in the RECORD.

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

[From the St. Petersburg Times, June 11, 2009]

AGAIN, WITH FEELING: NO NEW DRILLING

There is a rhythm to summer that has become as predictable in Washington as it is predatory and senseless: Schools let out, vacation season begins, gas prices rise and opportunists in Congress—encouraged by Big Oil—cite the pain at the pump to push for expanding offshore drilling, jeopardizing Florida's priceless coastline.

Do any of the 13 members of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee who voted to expand drilling Tuesday realize that the nation is moving in the opposite direction and seeking to reduce reliance on fossil fuels with a cleaner energy policy?

The committee approved an amendment to a Senate energy bill that would allow gas and oil drilling just 45 miles off Florida's west coast and even closer off the Florida Panhandle. It would wipe out a 2006 congressional compromise that bans drilling within 230 miles of Tampa Bay and 100 miles of the Panhandle through 2022. That exclusion zone is a reasonable line of defense. Florida's beaches are vital to the state's status as a world-class tourist destination.

Allowing drilling within 10 miles off the eastern Gulf Coast also would jeopardize an important training area for the Air Force and Navy.

As an energy strategy, the measure makes the Senate look hopelessly out of date. Twenty-eight states, in the absence of leadership in Washington, have set targets for renewable energy production. The purpose of energy legislation in both houses of Congress is to fashion a way to leverage billions of tax dollars to curb emissions of global-warming greenhouse gases, build more fuel-efficient cars and to foster investment in alternative energies.

The drilling amendment is an example of a time-honored tactic of tacking on something distasteful to broadly supported legislation. The bill, which committee members expect to pass today, also unfortunately encourages some Republican state legislators who have unsuccessfully sought to open state waters in the gulf to drilling. If the 2006 federal line falls, there will be no stopping the shortsighted in Tallahassee.

Sen. Bill Nelson, D-Fla., has vowed to filibuster the bill if it comes to that. The state's congressional delegation needs to show united opposition, and House members need to demand Speaker Nancy Pelosi stand by her commitment to the 2006 drill-free zone. Gov. Charlie Crist, who is running to succeed Sen. Mel Martinez, R-Fla., also needs to quit waffling and oppose this. And Defense Secretary Robert Gates should explain the implications for naval training and national security should offshore rigs and their attendant infrastructure spring up along the training ranges for America's military pilots. The energy bill is supposed to chart a new strategy going forward. The Senate is headed backward.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. This is what the article says:

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The St. Petersburg Times editorial continues:

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rection and seeking to reduce reliance on fossil fuels with a cleaner energy policy?

The committee approved an amendment to a Senate energy bill that would allow gas and oil drilling just 45 miles off Florida's west coast and even closer off the Florida Panhandle. It would wipe out a 2006 congressional compromise that bans drilling. . . .

And it goes on to cite the numbers I told you, basically keeping that eastern area off-limits.

The editorial continues:

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As an energy strategy, the measure makes the Senate look hopelessly out of date. Twenty-eight States, in the absence of leadership in Washington, have set targets for renewable energy production. The purpose of energy legislation in both Houses of Congress is to fashion a way to leverage billions of tax dollars to curb emissions of global-warming greenhouse gases, build more fuel-efficient cars, and to foster investment in alternative energies.

The editorial concludes by saying:

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I thank the Presiding Officer for her indulgence that I could get this off my chest. I don't want to mess up the Energy bill. It is critical for us. I am supportive of many of its provisions. But I am simply going to have to assert my rights under the Senate rules if they try to bring this as a part of that Energy bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. HAGAN). The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business for up to 15 minutes.

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

HEALTH CARE REFORM

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Madam President, the time for health care reform is now. We cannot afford to wait any longer. For some time, Peter Orszag, now President Obama's Budget Director, has warned that rising health costs are unsustainable and represent the central fiscal challenge facing the country.