

the government gives actual subsidies and gives actual tax breaks to renewable energy development, these are entitled “incentives for investment.” When the government refrains from taxing oil and gas producers more than they are already taxed, it is not an incentive for investment anymore. But now we are calling it a “market distortion.”

I lay this out to hopefully be able to verbalize my concern.

When the President spoke before the Congress at his State of the Union Address, when he spoke about tough decisions on new oil and gas exploration, I had hoped we would finally begin to be using more of our resources to meet our own energy needs. But from looking at the new budget, it looks more as though our energy producers will be the ones who will be making the tough decisions. They are going to be making a tough decision as to whether they continue to operate here, whether they shut down, whether they head overseas or whether they produce our energy.

The final area I wish to address is the issue of climate change. During his address, the President called on the Congress to develop comprehensive energy and climate legislation. But a few days later, when the budget came out, the EPA requested more than \$40 million in order to begin regulating greenhouse gas emissions on its own.

Here in the Senate we have at least 41 Members already on record as opposing that approach. That is about as bipartisan as any climate bill has been—as we have been—in this Congress. By allowing the EPA to move forward, the President is actually limiting Congress's ability to develop a bipartisan climate bill. Instead of debating cap and trade or a carbon tax, we are going to spend at least some of our time talking about the EPA's regulations. As I have said many times before, EPA's actions will harm our economy at a time when we can least afford it.

I also believe the debate over climate policy belongs here. It belongs in the Senate. It belongs in the House. It belongs here in Congress because that is where the best interests of our constituents can fully be represented.

The truth of the matter is the administration is looking to have it both ways. On the one hand, its budget assumes a cap-and-trade bill will pass and on the other it is seeking millions of dollars to impose these backdoor climate regulations. I hope the administration will change its mind on the matter and decide to work with us as we work toward a balanced and comprehensive bill. But I think we recognize that the threat of regulations has not worked. I do not think it will work. I think it is time to take that command-and-control approach off the table.

Some may wonder why I have taken the time to point out that the ideas in the President's State of the Union Address do not entirely match the prior-

ities that were outlined in the administration's new budget. This is not intended as a criticism of the President. I am ready to work with him on the ideas he has offered to see if we can make some real progress for the American people. But, instead, I raise these issues because I believe they help illustrate why we have had such a tough time agreeing on a path forward. I am happy to work with the President and his administration on nuclear energy, on offshore development, and work toward bipartisan legislation. But I am not willing to support many of the energy-related proposals we are seeing now within the administration's new budget.

Again, you might ask the question, why does it all matter? It matters because the budget is filled with programs that are authorized by Congress which are supposed to reflect not only our priorities but the priorities of the American people. And while it may not be readily apparent, the budget does send the signal about whether our work here is going to be continued by the executive branch. If the agencies seek to promote just some of our goals, and actually hamper others, that will only make Senators more cautious about what they are willing to support, especially if it is part of a comprehensive package.

Madam President, I am going to close this evening by simply reaffirming what I have said before. I am ready to work with the President on the ideas he has offered up during his State of the Union Address to help make those tough decisions on offshore development, to ensure a new generation of nuclear powerplants is built, to play a constructive role in bipartisan legislation.

But the energy proposals contained in the budget also make me question whether all of those priorities would receive equal treatment if put into law. I hope the agencies would carry out all of Congress's priorities—not just some—that could be contained in a bipartisan energy bill. The President's address several weeks ago makes me think that, in fact, this is all possible. But the new budget makes me question whether, in fact, that is the case.

With that, Madam President, I thank the Chair for the time and yield the floor.

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

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

EARTHQUAKE IN HAITI

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, bad things can bring out the best in people, and I rise today to speak about our response to the earthquake

that devastated Haiti last month and, in particular, about the compassionate efforts that Rhode Islanders have made to help those who suffered through this tragedy.

The 7.0 scale magnitude earthquake that struck Haiti on January 12, 2010, is the first great natural disaster of the new decade. Even before the quake struck, the small island nation of Haiti faced significant challenges as the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere.

Haiti has been wracked by years of political strife and the constant threat of hurricanes and tropical storms. This most recent catastrophe has led to, for us, almost unimaginable suffering on the part of the people of Haiti. On February 3, Haiti's Prime Minister Jean-Max Bellerive announced that over 200,000 people had been confirmed dead. The U.N. has estimated that over 3 million people have been directly affected by the disaster. In the capital of Port-au-Prince alone, over 700,000 people have been displaced, with over 480,000 departing the city altogether.

Even before the quake, many Rhode Islanders were helping down in Haiti. One constituent, Nathalie Gooding, a CPA from Warwick, was down there volunteering her time at an orphanage for young Haitian girls in Port-au-Prince. She was there when the quake hit. Days went by before her husband Michael and her children were able to communicate with her. As people with families around us—I know the distinguished Presiding Officer and I certainly can share the intense concern that family must have gone through hearing the news coming out of Haiti for hours and for days and knowing that their wife and their mom was down in the middle of that and not hearing from her. As my colleagues can imagine, it was a traumatic experience. Fortunately, as it turned out, Nathalie was safe and she is now back in Rhode Island with her family. But as I acknowledge our relief efforts after the quake, I also wish to acknowledge and commend all of the volunteers from Rhode Island and elsewhere who were so generously helping in Haiti even before the earthquake struck.

The response of the United States to this tragedy has been remarkable. In the weeks since the earthquake, the United States has provided over \$439 million in emergency humanitarian assistance. The Department of State, the U.S. Agency for International Development, the Department of Defense, and other government entities have all contributed to this effort. Water distribution, sanitation, and hygiene programs, food assistance, logistical support, provisions for shelter, and essential medical services have all been top priorities. The United States military has sent aircraft and ships to Haiti, including the USNS *Comfort* hospital ship and the aircraft carrier USS *Carl Vinson*. These vessels are providing medical treatment facilities and humanitarian assistance. In addition, the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit and the

Army's 82nd Airborne Division have contributed 5,500 troops to distribute humanitarian aid and provide search, rescue, and security support.

We have also seen extraordinary generosity from the American people, from the millions of dollars individuals and businesses have donated to help the victims of the quake to the volunteers who have selflessly traveled to Haiti to lend their valued expertise. Americans, with our spirit of generosity, have tried to help in any way they possibly can.

The outpouring of support in my State of Rhode Island for those affected by this catastrophe has been overwhelming. Many Rhode Islanders have generously donated to organizations to give whatever they can to the relief of this devastated country. At the Blessed Sacrament School in Providence, a school some of whose students have family members and loved ones in Haiti, the 270-plus students of this small school, pre-K to 8th grade, raised over \$1,680 for the Red Cross in a single day. Students and parents at the Frenchtown Elementary School in East Greenwich raised close to \$1,700 for the Save the Children relief organization to help those in Haiti. At the St. Mary Academy Bay View in Riverside, fifth graders have produced handmade yarn dolls which they are selling to raise money for the victims of the earthquake.

This month, students of the University of Rhode Island launched a "URI Helping Haiti Campaign" with the goal of raising \$100,000 for Plan USA, a Rhode Island-headquartered relief organization that provides direct humanitarian assistance to 1.5 million children in 49 countries across the globe, including, of course, Haiti.

Ten members of the Rhode Island National Guard's 143rd Airlift Wing flew to Haiti in January to assist in the relief efforts. The 143rd's latest humanitarian mission before this was in New Orleans assisting in the aftermath of one of our own country's greatest natural disasters, Hurricane Katrina. This time they flew to Haiti to provide medical transportation and evacuation assistance.

In January, even the Rhode Island Democratic and Republican parties put politics aside and came together to host a joint fundraiser to benefit the humanitarian relief efforts led by the Clinton-Bush Haiti Fund.

Rhode Island doctors such as Christopher Born, Sachita Shah, Stephen Sullivan, and Helena Taylor, of Rhode Island Hospital, traveled to Haiti in the days after the earthquake to provide critical medical services to those injured. These doctors lacked the medical equipment there that we here take for granted and they were also forced to use rudimentary medical procedures to treat the numerous patients who had lined up for assistance. But they did it, and they made a difference.

These stories represent only a small fraction of the generosity that Rhode

Islanders and the American people have exhibited in the weeks following the earthquake. It is truly inspiring how Americans have joined together to help the people of Haiti in this time of need. I know that the world is watching this example of America's generosity, good will, and professionalism. I am proud of the many contributions that came from my small State.

The thoughts and prayers of Rhode Islanders and indeed all Americans will continue to be with those who have suffered and are still suffering in this catastrophe as the recovery and rebuilding begins to take shape. I know the generosity and the good work will continue.

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.

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

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

NOMINATION OF SUSAN CARBON

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I came to speak because there are Senators—anonymous Senators—who are blocking the confirmation of Susan Carbon, who has been nominated to be the new Director of the Office of Violence Against Women. Susan is from my home State of New Hampshire. For 2 months, the Office of Violence Against Women was denied leadership and direction, not because there are Senators who think Susan Carbon is unqualified for this position but because they believed that blocking her confirmation somehow gains them leverage on completely unrelated pet issues. I understand that, hopefully, finally today, after the issue had been raised in the press, that hold has been lifted.

Blocking the confirmation of Susan Carbon as Director of the Office of Violence Against Women is a perfect example of what people see as what is wrong with Washington.

Every 2 minutes, someone in this country is a victim of sexual violence. Every 52 seconds, a woman is victimized by a spouse or a partner. These crimes devastate victims' lives. They shatter families. They often create fear in whole communities. The Office of Violence Against Women leads our Nation's efforts to prevent these deadly crimes and to identify, capture, and punish the perpetrators.

The Office of Violence Against Women works with law enforcement, with victim advocates, with the health care community, and so many others. It provides financial and technical assistance to communities across the country that are working to end domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking.

I am sure every Senator in this body personally knows someone who has been the victim of domestic violence or sexual assault. I am sure all Senators know how hard their local police and victim advocates work to stop domestic and sexual violence. They know how much the communities in their States appreciate the assistance they get from the Office of Violence Against Women. I would bet almost every Senator, at one time or another, has taken credit for the funding that the Office brings back to organizations within their home States.

Yet despite a unanimous vote by the Judiciary Committee back on December 3 of last year that recommended Susan Carbon's confirmation, unnamed Senators have blocked her confirmation for 2 months.

President Obama's choice to lead our country's efforts against domestic and sexual violence happens to be a State court judge from New Hampshire. It might interest some of the Republican Senators in this body to know—those who are blocking her confirmation—that it was JUDD GREGG, the senior Republican Senator from New Hampshire, who first recognized Susan's capabilities and potential. In 1991, then-Governor GREGG appointed Susan Carbon to be a part-time district court judge. After I became Governor, I appointed Susan to be a full-time judge. Because of her commitment to ending domestic violence and her expertise in family law, she was named the supervisory judge of the family division in New Hampshire, a position she still holds.

Susan Carbon is exceptionally qualified to serve as the Director of the Office of Violence Against Women. She is the leading voice in New Hampshire on domestic violence and family law, and she has been the driving force behind so many of New Hampshire's efforts to strengthen legal protections for victims of domestic violence.

Susan also has become a national leader on domestic violence. She frequently serves as a faculty member for the National Judicial Institute on Domestic Violence, and she chaired the project which produced the guidebook for professionals and their work around domestic violence court orders.

I do not know what political party Susan Carbon belongs to and it does not matter because she is a good and decent person who is anxious to take on the responsibility of leading the Office of Violence Against Women.

I ask Senators who think about blocking such nominations in the future to imagine what it is like to explain to a nonpartisan, earnest public servant, eager to assume a new position of national leadership, that her confirmation is being blocked because one or two anonymous Senators want a new Federal building or some other project in their States or want a defense contract awarded to a certain company or because they are mad at Attorney General Eric Holder for some unrelated issue.