

the President to demonstrate this administration's commitment to the Iranian people's struggle for human rights.

We know that Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, Iranian Presidential Chief of Staff Esfandiar Rahim Mashaei and other senior Iranian government officials are directly responsible for and complicit in ordering, controlling, or otherwise directing the commission of serious human rights abuses against the people of Iran on or after June 12, 2009.

Pursuant to Executive Order 13553 and the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010, the President should designate these individuals as human rights abusers and reaffirm our core American values: freedom, democracy and human rights.

I would just end by quoting from section 105 of the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions Accountability and Divestment Act of 2010, signed by the President into law last year. It requires that the executive branch produce a list of persons who are responsible or complicit in certain rights abuses. It says:

Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a list of persons who are officials of the Government of Iran or persons acting on behalf of that Government (including members of paramilitary organizations such as Ansar-e-Hezbollah and Basij-e Mostaz'afin), that the President determines, based on credible evidence, are responsible for or complicit in, or responsible for ordering, controlling, or otherwise directing, the commission of serious human rights abuses against citizens of Iran or their family members on or after June 12, 2009, regardless of whether such abuses occurred in Iran.

Clearly this official about to arrive in the United States meets the standard under section 105 of CISADA, and the U.S. administration should designate him as an abuser of human rights. He should not be admitted entry into the United States.

We should call it the way we see it, which is, this is one of the most dangerous human rights-abusing officials that we know of. Comprehensive data now exists from Human Rights Watch, from Amnesty International, even from the United Nations on what this man has directed. He should not be given a visa, and he should be so listed under U.S. law.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

IRAN SANCTIONS ACT

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I rise to speak on an issue I feel I have spent a

lot of time talking about in recent years but without much effect on either of the last two administrations. This is the issue of the Iran Sanctions Act. Congress has worked in a bipartisan way to strengthen and expand the Iran Sanctions Act, but in spite of our repeated efforts, the administration has not been willing to use the tools the Congress has given them.

In my mind—and I am sure in the minds of a great many of my colleagues—nothing would be more destabilizing to the Mideast region and to Middle Eastern regional security or global security than Iran's development of a nuclear weapon. I will not spend a lot of time talking about why that is because I doubt there is any Member of this body who is not aware of how dangerous this situation is or could be, which is why it is even more frustrating that we have not been able to get the administration to push a more robust set of sanctions using the sanctions policy and the sanctions tools we have given them.

During the 15 years between the time the Iran and Libya Sanctions Act was passed, in 1996, and last year, no meaningful application of these sanctions was ever adopted. From 1996 until last year, no meaningful application has ever been adopted.

In 2006, I worked closely with the Bush administration to pass a bill known as the Iran Freedom Support Act, to improve the menu in the choices of sanctions available to that administration and future administrations. Under that bill, Congress codified some of the executive actions President Clinton and President Bush appropriately took and ensured that these tools became more permanent.

Last year, alarmed again at the administration's disinterest in using the sanctions available to it, Congress again acted to tighten our sanctions policy. The Congress sunsetted the State Department's period of investigatory review to ensure that once an investigation is launched, it has to be concluded. It is now up to the Obama administration to pursue a vigorous sanctions policy that sends the message to Iran that: You are isolated in the world and the world will not tolerate this nuclear program.

On March 26, 2009, I sent a letter to Secretary Clinton asking for clarification on why the administration had not fully implemented sanctions against Iran. I had sent a similar letter to Secretary Rice in 2007, suggesting—in fact, stating—that the Bush administration was similarly delinquent in its enforcement efforts. We have given them the tools, but, simply, these administrations, in both cases, have not used those tools.

Fortunately, we now see the first indications that we are beginning to head in the right direction. Last fall, the State Department announced sanctions against Naftiran, a Swiss subsidiary of the National Iranian Oil Company. In an appearance before the Senate I was

at with Secretary Clinton a few days ago, I was positive about my sense that this was a big step in the right direction but really only one step. Since the Iran Sanctions Act, this is the first time ever the act has been used. I am pleased it has been used, but, remember, it is the first time ever it has been used.

This action—to make it even more important that it is being used and frustrating that it hasn't been used—by the State Department had an immediate effect, as I and many others have been suggesting it would since the passage of these tools to the administration. Within days of the State Department's actions against Naftiran, and according to news reports at the time, European firms such as Royal Dutch Shell, Total, Statoil, and Italy ENI announced they would pull operations out of Iran's energy sector—exactly the kind of impact the Congress had hoped this would have.

On September 29, 2010, Deputy Secretary Steinberg announced the State Department's initiation of investigations into international firms that had not yet committed to exit Iran's petroleum sector. While the full list of these firms remains classified, publicly available reports suggest that list includes at least a dozen firms, many of which are Chinese, including the Chinese National Offshore Oil Company, Chinese National Petroleum Company, and Unipet. Other firms come from Germany, from Turkey, and from Venezuela. The list also includes the Industrial Bank of China, the China Construction Bank, the Agricultural Bank of China, and the Bank of China, which are reportedly providing financial services to Iranian interests in violation of the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions Act.

Under the law that now governs our sanctions policy, the State Department has 6 months to complete these investigations before announcing whether these entities will face sanctions. These notifications are due by March 29 of this year. I am very hopeful the State Department report sends the right message on March 29. It has been a long time for those of us who have advocated that this kind of action would produce the right kind of results.

U.S. sanctions policy should complement the international sanctions effort underway at the U.N. and other international venues. There is no reason we can't pursue a strategic sanctions policy that ensures companies operating in the United States or affiliated with U.S. entities don't invest in Iran's energy sector. It is time we demonstrated that we are serious about this before it is too late.

We have now taken the first step in the right direction. It has produced exactly the results we had hoped those steps would take. I and others anxiously await the report that will come out between now and March 29 to see what the next steps are, and then we will be looking carefully to see what

the reaction to those actions is. I hope we continue to show we are serious, that sanctions will only work if the nations involved—and particularly the United States—follow their own policies and use their own tools.

I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. SHAHEEN). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

NATURAL RESOURCE POTENTIAL

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Madam President, I have come to the floor this evening to discuss America's tremendous natural resource potential and to again highlight the fact that if we choose to, we can absolutely produce more of our energy to meet more of our Nation's needs. I also wish to address an argument that is often made in opposition to new domestic production, because I believe each and every Member of this Chamber needs to know the facts and the consequences of our current approach.

Without a doubt, understanding how much energy we have is at the very foundation of an energy policy. The Presiding Officer sits on the Energy Committee with me and we talk about our Nation's energy policy. When we talk about an all-of-the above, balanced energy portfolio, it is important to understand what it is we have. For resources such as wind and solar, it is pretty easy. They are renewable, so theoretically we should never run out. But for conventional resources, which make up about 83 percent of the energy America consumes, it is a different story. Oil and natural gas and coal aren't located on the surface of the Earth, so we don't exactly know what it is we have and where we have it. We have to look around for it.

Finding and quantifying our resources is a tough enough task. Adding to the complexity is litany of technical terms used to describe them. There are proved reserves, probable reserves, possible reserves, unproved reserves, and our demonstrated reserve base. Then we move into the resources which are different from the reserves, and that list includes eight more categories, and every one of them means something different. I would imagine most people don't have a great understanding of these terms, and by and large I suppose that is fine, unless you happen to be a Member of the Senate, because we are tasked with helping to formulate our Nation's energy policy. We need to know the details and the distinctions.

Before we make critical decisions that affect the price and the source of our energy supply, it is our responsibility to know what our experts think we actually have in this country. To help gain a better understanding of our

Nation's energy base, Senator INHOFE of Oklahoma and I requested a report from the Congressional Research Service. The report was first released back in October of 2009, and then in November the CRS experts updated that report. It is entitled "U.S. Fossil Fuel Resources: Terminology Reporting and Summary." Fascinating, I am sure. It actually is fascinating, and it should be required reading for each and every Member of the Senate.

Education is not the only reason we released this report, though. We also hope it will help to set the record straight. Too many of the facts presented here, particularly about energy, are based upon foregone conclusions. In some people's minds, we are supposedly running out of oil—well, because we have always been running out of oil. So at our request, CRS also surveyed existing government estimates to determine exactly how much conventional energy we think we might have.

I think most would find the results surprising. The truth is, our experts don't believe we are on the verge of running out of oil, out of natural gas, or of coal. Far from it.

According to the government's own estimates, the United States actually has the largest fossil fuel endowment in the world. To repeat, we have the largest fossil fuel endowment in the world—larger than Russia, far larger than countries such as Saudi Arabia and China. Within our own endowment is an incredible source of oil—an estimated 163 billion barrels of technically recoverable resources—again, going back to that terminology. There are 163 billion barrels of technically recoverable resources, which would be enough to maintain current production for more than 60 years.

We have huge volumes of natural gas, potentially more than 2,000 trillion cubic feet, which would last 90 years at today's rate of consumption. Our coal resources are truly unrivaled, and at 264 billion short tons, our supply will last more than 200 years.

I will put up a chart here and speak to what we are looking at in terms of proven reserves and recoverable resources, when we are talking about oil.

Back to the CRS report. They found that we have a tremendous range of subeconomic resources that are not yet commercialized, including an estimated 100 billion barrels of heavy oil, more than 800 billion barrels of oil shale, and up to 320,000 trillion cubic feet of methane hydrates. For oil shale, that is over 100 years' worth of conventional oil. For methane hydrates, that would be an amazing 14,000 years' worth of natural gas, if we endeavor to find ways to produce it.

Looking at the chart—I am throwing out a lot of numbers and years. It is kind of tough to get your arms around all of this. But if you look to the share of proven reserves only, within our country—that 28 billion barrels of oil, 17 percent—it leaves out the rest of America's recoverable oil, or 135 billion

barrels. 83 percent of what is estimated that we have within this country are resources and are, for all intents and purposes, off limits to us. So the share of proven reserves that we are talking about—the 17 percent—versus the 83 percent of recoverable oil which is off limits to us.

The numbers in the CRS report are our best experts' best estimates on how much we have out there—how much oil, natural gas, coal, and unconventional fossil fuels lie within the United States. These numbers can be obtained by anybody who works in Congress, anybody who is capable of navigating to my Web site, or you can go to Senator INHOFE's Web site. I do hope Members in the Chamber will make good use of it.

Not only does this report provide objective figures for the Senate to use, it also casts serious doubt on many of the false arguments made against new domestic production. So I think it is important to recognize again what it is that we have. This is not any classified secret.

I want to give a couple specifics here, if I might. When you hear about some of the language or the statements that are made and are accepted as fact, there is a claim heard regularly on the Senate floor—and I heard it used by the President last week—that the United States has just 2 percent of the world's oil reserves but consumes 25 percent of the world's oil. Well, that line is designed to make the audience think that the United States is both running out of oil and also using it at an unsustainable rate. The truth is that government officials have claimed that in the United States we have been running out of oil since about 1919, but we are still the world's third largest producer, behind Russia and Saudi Arabia. But we are well ahead of everybody else.

If you think back to the categories I named earlier—and I am talking about the different categories of reserves and resources—you can see why simply referring to proven reserves is misleading because those account for only a very small sliver of our total oil. So to classify a barrel of oil as a reserve, you literally have to drill and prove that it is there. By definition, that excludes all the lands that have never been explored, so that is the big chunk of the pie on the chart here. It excludes a huge range of places where we believe there is oil, and in the end, it dramatically underestimates our Nation's oil resources.

Consider this: The proven oil reserves of the United States—the share of proven reserves, the 17 percent—have never exceeded 40 billion barrels. But over the past 110 years that the United States has been producing, we have managed to produce nearly 200 billion barrels of oil. On the books, we say there is only 40 billion barrels, but we have been producing nearly 200 billion barrels of oil over the past century. That alone should cast doubt on the words of so many.