

million acres of them are in active production. The Bureau of Land Management issued over 4,000 drilling permits last year—4,000 of them—but approximately 2,500 of them still remained unused at the end of the year.

So this argument that the requests for permits to drill are stacking up in some bureaucratic office in Washington and if they would just approve them, these oil companies would start drilling more oil and gas prices would come down, is not the truth. The Bureau of Land Management issued 4,000 drilling permits last year; 2,500 of them went unused.

I support measures proposed by my colleagues to force the oil companies to use their leases or lose them. The bill would require nonproducing leases to pay an annual fee of \$4 an acre. These leases of public lands should be actively used for domestic energy production, not kept idle as we face higher oil prices.

Let me close by saying I recently returned from a trip to China—10 days in China. China is an enigma. On the one hand, they are the most significant economic partner of the United States. They are our largest creditor. They loan us more money than any other country. On the other hand, they are our most significant economic competitor. Partner and competitor, that is the relationship.

When you go to China, you are struck by the fact that their air pollution is horrible. In every city we visited, I cannot imagine how people live there full time and do not develop serious health problems because of the terrible pollution they have in their country. But despite the pollution, they are creating an expanding economy. They are building right and left. What are they focusing on as the No. 1 area where China wants to dominate the world? Clean energy. In every direction: solar panels and wind turbines and new research on clean energy.

I wish I could say the same for the United States. But I am afraid I cannot. We do not have an energy policy. We are still dependent on traditional fuels. We still have to recognize those fuels create environmental issues we have to face, and, unfortunately, we are not. We are not acknowledging the fact that if we are not careful, China is going to dominate in the world when it comes to clean energy throughout the course of this century.

We need an energy policy in this country, not just to deal with the terrible gas prices we are facing today but to deal with a future which makes us less dependent on foreign oil.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

#### HONORING CARL PIKE

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I rise today to once again touch on a subject that is important to me. I know it is very important to the Presiding Officer because the Commonwealth of Virginia and the great State of Maryland have a large number of Federal employees. As the Presiding Officer knows, this week we celebrate Public Service Recognition Week to honor public servants at all levels of government for their admirable patriotism and contributions to our country.

I wish to begin by commending our military intelligence professionals for the coordinated and painstaking work that was responsible for tracking down Osama bin Laden. There are a number of nameless, faceless Federal workers who have been investigating his whereabouts for more than a decade. I was proud to be in this Chamber with the Presiding Officer and colleagues from both sides of the aisle when, on Tuesday afternoon, this body recognized their work.

Our military and intelligence professionals are not the only ones on the front lines of keeping our country safe. Today, I rise to honor a resident of Reston, VA, Carl Pike, the Assistant Special Agent in Charge of the Special Operations Division at the Drug Enforcement Administration, DEA. This is a photo of Carl and his whole team.

We have all seen reports in recent years detailing the violent and inhumane acts of the Mexican drug cartels that terrorize cities and control a significant percentage of the narcotics flowing into the United States. Mr. Pike is the head of a complex multi-agency task force set up to catch many of these violent criminals and disrupt the flow of drugs. Last year, he and his team led the largest strike ever against La Familia, one of the most ruthless Mexican drug cartels and a major trafficker of methamphetamine in the United States. The strike, dubbed "Project Coronado," was an operation that spanned 20 States, 50 cities, 2 countries, and multiple Federal agencies. Attorney General Eric Holder said the "unprecedented, coordinated U.S. law enforcement action" was a "significant blow to La Familia's supply chain of illegal drugs, weapons and cash flowing between Mexico and the United States."

The strike would not have been possible without Mr. Pike, as so many of his colleagues attest. One DEA Special Assistant Agent in Charge said:

He oversaw the broad interests of the law enforcement community, displayed phenomenal negotiating and planning skills, and facilitated collaboration between agencies and international partners that often had competing interests.

In the end, Project Coronado led to the arrest of 1,200 associates of La Familia and the seizure of 1½ tons of methamphetamine, \$32 million in cash, and 400 weapons. It truly was a significant achievement.

Carl Pike and his team should be recognized for removing dangerous drugs

and criminals off our streets—something for which we can all be grateful.

I hope my colleagues will join me in honoring Mr. Pike and his team as well as all those at the DEA for their excellence and service to our Nation.

I was also proud to be part of a group earlier today recognizing a number of Federal employees—nine from the Commonwealth of Virginia and many from the State of Maryland—who were part of a national competition that recognizes quality work of government workers.

As we see this week in broad display those military intelligence professionals in this most dramatic action against Osama bin Laden, as we see Mr. Pike and his team taking on drug cartels, and as we see the hundreds of thousands of other Federal workers who day-in and day-out, often without recognition, do the job of keeping our government operating and in many ways keeping our country safe, I hope my colleagues will join in saluting those efforts and recognize that this week, Public Service Recognition Week, is to honor all of our public servants.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, do I understand correctly that we are continuing in morning business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Yes.

#### RUSSIAN RULE OF LAW

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, on several occasions I have risen to address my colleagues on the topic of Russia and the continuing sad state of the rule of law in the Russian Federation. Today, I rise once again to address the latest information regarding the absence of a rule-of-law framework in Russia's approach to businesses and investors. Specifically, this situation negatively impacts the United States and the entire international community.

There have been a number of poor decisions around the world related to the Yukos Oil issue that highlight Russia's hostility toward investment and business. As my colleagues may be aware, GML, the majority shareholder of the former Yukos Oil, previously headed by businessman and now political prisoner Mikhail Horders, has a \$100 billion arbitration claim against the Russian Federation to obtain compensation for the Yukos assets which were summarily taken between 2003 and 2005.

Several recent developments demonstrate yet again that international courts do not recognize Russia's 2003 expropriation of Yukos Oil Company as legitimate and that former stakeholders of the company may pursue compensation for their assets that were seized improperly and, in essence, nationalized by the Russian State.

Court victories handed to shareholders involved in the dispute indicate that the international legal system

will not recognize the validity of Russia's bankruptcy of Yukos. In December 2009, the New York Times detailed one of these victories in which an independent arbitration panel made a jurisdictional ruling that shareholders of the former Yukos Oil Company, GML, had the right to file and pursue an estimated \$100 billion in damages from the Russian Government. The tribunal determined that Russia, as a signatory, was bound by the Energy Charter Treaty and must adhere to its provisions. This claim now moves to the next stage, with a decision expected in October 2013—regrettably slow but moving surely.

The most recent victory occurred in December of last year and involved a second international arbitration tribunal in Stockholm, which awarded RosInvestCo UK, a minority shareholder of Yukos, \$3.5 million for the damages resulting from the Russian Government's actions. This was the first case in which anyone seriously examined the claims of an individual Yukos shareholder. The panel independently and unanimously concluded that the Russian Federation was liable for expropriating RosInvestCo's assets. I stress to you that this was a unanimous decision even though the tribunal included a Russian arbitrator.

I bring these developments to the attention of my Senate colleagues because I believe they demonstrate a growing movement in the international community that holds Russia accountable for its actions toward investors, and it is a movement the United States should support.

Minority shareholders, such as RosInvestCo, are just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to shareholders who lost billions that were rightfully theirs as a result of the seizure of Yukos assets. In the United States alone, shareholders were stripped of \$6 billion to \$12 billion.

Russia's actions toward Yukos remind us that investment in Russia is extremely risky. The international community is taking note. Americans are taking note. American legislators should take note.

Recent court decisions indicate that the legitimacy of the Russian Government's claims over Yukos assets are suspect at best.

With these thoughts in mind, I urge my colleagues to continue working to ensure protection and adequate mechanisms for U.S. shareholders and businesses doing business in Russia.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana is recognized.

#### GULF SHUTDOWN ANNIVERSARY

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, tomorrow, May 6, will mark the 1-year anniversary of the formal moratorium placed on Gulf of Mexico energy production by President Obama and Secretary Salazar. I wish to speak on the eve of that occasion, particularly as

our constituents continue to see the price at the pump go up and up, with really no end in sight. I think those two facts are deeply related because I think this moratorium, which continues as a de facto moratorium—a “permatorium” or a permit logjam to this day—is really one of the most poorly thought out, mismanaged, and ill-conceived energy decisions in terms of domestic energy production in our history.

The first of these moratoriums in the gulf—there are actually three different formal moratoriums—was announced on behalf of President Obama by Secretary Salazar 1 year ago tomorrow, May 6, 2010. It was done, in retrospect, we find out, very hastily and without scientific backing and justification. I say that because after that first moratorium was put down on May 6, 2010, on June 22 a Federal judge, Martin Feldman, of the Eastern District of Louisiana ruled against this job-crushing moratorium. It banned drilling below 500 feet of water for 6 months. But Judge Feldman put it on hold because he found that under Federal law it had failed to properly weigh a number of factors, including the economic impact it would have on the industry and surrounding communities.

I might add, in a hearing we had in the Senate about the administration's decision to place the moratorium in effect, it was shocking to hear administration officials say very directly—no holds barred—that they never considered any economic impact in the decision whatsoever. Again, failing to properly weigh the economic impact of the decision has been a chronic problem in some agencies, such as the EPA.

Unfortunately, this administration seems to have brought that same knee-jerk reaction to the Interior Department with the same economic illiteracy. In the Interior Department's infinite wisdom, on July 12, Secretary Salazar issued a backup second moratorium. The court struck down the first moratorium on the basis of existing Federal law, so he just came and issued a second moratorium on deepwater drilling. The second moratorium would soon be met with resistance and disappointment as coastal Louisiana communities would realize there was nothing they could do to stop Interior, which seemed hell-bent on adversely impacting their jobs.

On October 12, Secretary Salazar celebrated an illusory victory by lifting that moratorium, and at the time, he claimed that “the policy position we are articulating today is that we are open for business.” That is what Secretary Ken Salazar said on October 12. Unfortunately, those of us who live in Louisiana and along the gulf coast know that is not true. What he should have said is, the policy position we are articulating today is that we are open for business as long as you don't need a permit from the Interior Department, because that second formal moratorium was lifted, but that brought us to

the initiation of the third moratorium—not a formal moratorium but a de facto one, a permatorium, a complete permit logjam in this administration and at the Department of the Interior. Again, this has been commonly and accurately referred to as a de facto moratorium, sometimes a permatorium, an absolute permit logjam. Secretary Salazar has perpetuated that, and Director Bromwich has perpetuated that. They repeatedly stated it doesn't exist, but the facts, the statistics, the numbers make bare that lie.

It would not be for 4 more months—until February 28 of this year—that the Interior Department would issue the very first permit to drill in deep water an exploratory well. So, again, big celebration, big announcements that the formal moratorium was lifted, but for 4 months zero permits and only 4 months later the first deepwater exploratory permit.

To date, even since February 28 of this year, there have only been 12 deepwater permits issued in the gulf. That pace is well below the pace before the BP disaster—about 60 percent slower than the prespill pace. This is for shallow and deep water combined. The pace of only deepwater new well permits—permits that would increase domestic supplies and our reserves—is forthcoming at the average pace of one per month—just a trickle, just a tiny percentage of the predisaster pace.

Tomorrow will be 1 year since the Obama administration implemented this moratorium policy, the first of three crushing moratoriums, two formal moratoriums, the ongoing de facto moratorium. The Energy Information Administration—and that is a non-partisan division of the Department of Energy—is now estimating that the falloff in domestic production this year alone will be about 200,000 barrels per day—that is a lot of oil, 200,000 barrels per day—and an additional 200,000 barrels per day in 2012. To put this falloff in production that is expected from the Obama administration's policy in perspective, as a result of the permitting logjam, by 2012 we would lose as much production in the Gulf of Mexico as we currently import from Brazil and Colombia combined. These are the two countries, by the way, that are supported with taxpayer-funded guaranteed projects related to their energy production. This falloff in production in the gulf by 2012 is roughly equivalent also to what we imported in January from Iraq.

There are several points I would like to highlight for tomorrow's anniversary of the initiation of this moratorium policy.

First, the price of gasoline at the pump is now \$3.98 a gallon. It has more than doubled since President Obama took office. There is perhaps not a greater antistimulus for our economy than the doubling of the price at the pump.

Second, seven deepwater rigs have left the Gulf of Mexico. They are gone,