

equip manufacturing facilities to begin commercial-scale production of its energy efficient electric vehicles. Awarding this opportunity to Aptera Motors will greatly assist a leading developer of electric vehicles in my district.

Electric vehicle initiatives like Aptera's will aid U.S. long-term energy goals by shifting away from fossil fuels and using viable renewable energy sources like plug-in electric energy. Additionally, Aptera's vehicles will reduce dependence on foreign oil and enhance energy security. Aptera's project will also promote domestic job creation throughout California as well as in other states.

Unlike many other electric vehicles, Aptera's energy efficient vehicles have a range of over 100 miles per charge and the possibility to become one of the most energy efficient vehicles in the world. A loan to Aptera will help accelerate the move from gasoline-powered vehicles to cleaner electric vehicles.

I urge you to give Aptera Motors' Advanced Technology Vehicles Manufacturing Incentive Program funding application full consideration. If I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me or my Press Assistant, Justin LoFranco at (202) 225-3906.

Respectfully,

DARRELL ISSA,
Member of Congress.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC.

Re Quallion application for Department of Energy's Electric Drive and Vehicle Battery and Component Manufacturing Initiative grant.

Secretary STEVEN CHU,
U.S. Department of Energy, Independence Ave.,
SW, Washington, DC.

DEAR SECRETARY CHU: The State of California has traditionally assumed a leading role in fighting global warming and working to eliminate our dependence on foreign sources of oil. We want to commend you for also taking effective steps towards achieving these goals. As part of this effort, the Department of Energy's Electric Drive and Vehicle Battery and Component Manufacturing Initiative is currently reviewing submissions for the construction of new lithium ion battery facilities in the United States. The Initiative is a huge step forward in our efforts to improve our environment, eliminate our dependence on foreign sources of oil and create a modern "green collar" workforce here in the United States.

Quallion, an innovative American company located in California, can be a valuable partner in your efforts because it is ready today to directly support President Obama's goal to have one million plug-in hybrid cars on the road by 2015. Quallion is a world leader in the development of customized lithium ion batteries for medical, military, aerospace and vehicle applications. If Quallion is successful in its bid for grants through the Department of Energy's Electric Drive and Vehicle Battery and Component Manufacturing Initiative, it is set to immediately execute the construction of a state-of-the-art manufacturing facility to produce advanced lithium ion cells, modules and battery technology in volumes that will meet America's current and future military and commercial needs. Quallion projects that with this grant funding the proposed facility could be fully operational by 2012, and could produce more than 20,000 lithium ion batteries each year.

In addition, Quallion projects that this funding will create more than 2,300 new and long-term jobs nationwide. It will also signal America's seriousness to the world that we

are ready to compete in the manufacturing of green technologies, in this case the lithium ion battery manufacturing space.

The lithium ion batteries manufactured in Quallion's new facility will have the potential to deliver real and immediate environmental solutions, while also creating new jobs at a time when Americans need them the most. The Environmental Protection Agency estimates that truck idling results in the emission of 11 million tons of CO₂ and the consumption of 960 million gallons of diesel fuel annually. Quallion's new facility will produce zero emission advanced lithium ion batteries designed to replace engine idling as a power source for stationary trucks. Quallion will deliver an immediate clean energy solution that enables the 1 million heavy trucks on our roads to comply with the growing number of anti-idling laws across the U.S., eliminate unnecessary pollution, and significantly reduce America's consumption of fossil fuels.

We believe that the Department of Energy's Electric Drive and Vehicle Battery and Component Manufacturing Initiative can and will play a large role in helping us achieve our goals. We are also confident that Quallion is a perfect partner in our objectives and will advance projects that are vital to our energy policy and national security.

Thank you for the leadership you have provided the Department and our country as we embark on an exciting era in our nation's stewardship of the environment and as we move towards our shared goal of energy independence.

Sincerely,

Brad Sherman, Dana Rohrabacher, Lynn C. Woolsey, Howard L. Berman, Lois Capps, Brian P. Bilbray, Diane E. Watson, Gary G. Miller, Jim Costa, Kevin McCarthy, Howard P. "Buck" McKeon, Ken Calvert, Duncan Hunter, Darrell E. Issa, David Dreier, Jerry McNerney, Adam B. Schiff.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, DC, December 21, 2010.

Hon. STEVEN CHU,
U.S. Department of Energy,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SECRETARY CHU: We are writing to reiterate our strong support for Next Autoworks Company's loan application under the Department of Energy's Advanced Technology Vehicle Manufacturing (ATVM) program and inquire about the status of the application.

Next Autoworks resubmitted a revised ATVM application in May 2010 that was almost immediately declared substantially complete and expeditiously reviewed for technical and financial merit. We appreciate the Department's work to move the application through several critical stage-gates over the past several months.

Next Autoworks has the ability to transform communities in Louisiana by bringing critical economic growth and jobs to our state and region. As you know, the company plans to re-equip a former Guide Corp plant in Monroe, LA that was shuttered in 2006 and establish a production facility that would bring approximately 1,400 direct jobs and an additional 1,800 indirect jobs to Northeast Louisiana. In addition, the project will create thousands of jobs at supplier facilities across the U.S. The State of Louisiana and local communities have already demonstrated their commitment to the project by offering the company \$82 million in grants, \$12.8 in employee training services, and an estimated \$33.8 million in tax abatements to support the project.

Every day that Next Autoworks' application is delayed is another day that workers cannot be hired to begin work at the Monroe

site and help mitigate our state's continued high unemployment rate. Moreover, continued delay in the financing for the project will also negatively impact the vehicle's launch timing and this Administration's goals for fuel economy. DOE's own environmental assessment of this project, issued in October 2010, states that Next Autoworks' vehicle will have a significant positive impact on fleet fuel economy and the environment by providing a high quality, affordable "green" car to the American market.

We strongly urge you to continue to expedite Next Autoworks' application. We would request an update on the status of the application and expected timeframe for moving forward before the end of the year.

Sincerely,

MARY LANDRIEU,
U.S. Senator.
DAVID VITTER,
U.S. Senator.
RODNEY ALEXANDER,
Member of Congress.

Ms. LANDRIEU. I yield the floor.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, first of all, I ask unanimous consent that I be permitted to speak for no more than 5 minutes and that the Senator from West Virginia follow my presentation.

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

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, first of all, I want to thank the Senator from Louisiana. I also want to point out, look at all those red lines. Those are the paths of hurricanes. Where do you think most of them were going between 1851 and 2008? And why are folks like us on the gulf coast and the Atlantic coast so sensitive about disaster money? It is because we have been hit over and over.

Our lands we call paradise. But they happen to be, as the Senator from Louisiana said, in the middle of "hurricane highway." It is a part of our lifestyle. When I was a kid, it was an excuse to get out of school. When I was a bachelor, it was an excuse to have a party. But now that I have the privilege of representing one of those very large gulf coast States and Atlantic coast States, it is absolute, utter destruction.

When Hurricane Andrew hit Miami, had it turned one degree to the north, and instead drawn a bead on the Dade-Broward line in north Miami, it would have been a \$50 billion insurance loss storm in 1992 dollars. That would have been upward of \$80 billion today. It would have taken down every insurance company that was doing business in the path of that storm. This is the destructive power. Do our people need help? Of course they need help.

BOB LEVINSON

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I came to speak on a different subject. A retired FBI agent named Bob Levinson, over 4 years ago, disappeared when he checked out of his hotel in the Iranian tourist attraction of Kish Island in the Persian Gulf. He disappeared. It is only recently that his family—and he leaves behind a family

of a wife and seven children—only recently have they had the belief that he is alive.

We have brought this to all levels of our government. This Senator, who represents the State Christine Levinson lives in, went to the Iranian Ambassador at the United Nations years ago trying to intervene. Our Secretary of State has, in fact, pushed this very hard.

Why am I saying all this? Because on the occasion of the release of the hikers by the Iranian Government, for whatever compassion they have shown—the government bringing together disparate parties that had their own little power centers in Iran—whatever success they had in bringing that together and releasing those hikers back to their loved ones, we pray that same decisionmaking apparatus in Tehran would now activate the process to bring Bob Levinson home to his wife and seven children.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, first of all, I say to my good friend from Florida, I thank him so much for the compassion he has. I appreciate very much him bringing this issue to our light and to the attention of all of us, and maybe we can help. I thank the Senator.

To my good friend, the Senator from Louisiana, I think what she speaks about is us identifying who we are as Americans and the way we have taken care of each other. I do not know of any State that has not had to depend on FEMA for help—and not just the States she showed where “hurricane alley” is and where the tornadoes and hurricanes have hit, but basically all of us have had to depend on FEMA for assistance. So I think what she brings to light is the fairness we identify with as Americans and to do what we have always done: to take care of each other. I, for one, have said we need to rebuild America; we need to take care of Americans first.

FISCAL CHOICES

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the difficult fiscal choices we, as Members of Congress, must soon make and the deficit-cutting proposals that President Obama has recently made.

As we discuss these fiscal choices, and as we face our exploding debts and deficits, it is clear our Nation is truly at a crossroads. A nation that was built on the strength of our people's optimism must struggle to overcome a loss of confidence—a loss of confidence that comes from an economy that has struggled for far too long, a loss of confidence that comes from watching debt and deficits explode, a loss of confidence that comes from watching Republicans and Democrats engage in a fruitless partisan fight.

The American people worry about how to get their families out of debt

and their financial house in order. They worry about finding or keeping a job. They worry about how they are going to pay the rent, how they are going to take care of their children, how they are going to keep clothes on their backs, and how, maybe, they can buy them a Christmas present.

Once again, instead of all of us coming together to do what is right for the Nation and lighten their worries, congressional Republicans and Democrats alike, and the President, are again gearing up for a fight about politics, even as our Nation's fiscal and economic picture gets worse every minute.

Today, we yet again find ourselves on the brink, and I cannot begin to explain why to the American people. This summer, they watched us go through this exercise—the Senate, the House, and the President—and then we agreed on spending cuts to keep the government working. Where I come from—the same as the Presiding Officer from the great State of Minnesota—your word is your bond, and an agreement is an agreement, and it is one that should be kept. It is one we negotiated. It should not be changed in midstream. I am committed to passing a clean CR to keep our government working until the supercommittee we all are supporting comes up with the recommendations to reduce the deficit.

In the midst of yet another disagreement over whether to keep the government running, the people of West Virginia and the American people are demanding we put our partisan differences aside and work together in the best interests of this country. They are pleading for us to quit fighting and worrying about the next election and start worrying about the next generation.

With our Nation facing a death spiral of debt, now is the time that each of us should be zeroing in on credible, commonsense solutions that have truly bipartisan support.

After carefully reviewing the President's recommendations to the so-called supercommittee, I believe they fall short of what this country needs to put our fiscal house in order. President Obama's deficit recommendations not only fall short of his stated \$4.4 trillion goal, but could, according to an analysis done by the Center for Responsible Federal Budget, have the perverse effect of adding as much as \$1.9 trillion to our Nation's debt.

I am also greatly concerned about rehashing unproductive recommendations such as raising tax rates on small businesses in a recession and budget gimmicks such as the notion that taxpayers will somehow “save” \$1.1 trillion from not fighting wars in Afghanistan and Iraq—and I believe we should not be there anyway.

I have said this: On my best day, I cannot sell that to the people of West Virginia, nor should we try to sell it to the American people.

That is not to say that the President's proposal is all bad. There is

some good stuff in there. I have long said our tax system needs to be more fair and balanced and that billionaires such as Mr. Buffett should pay their fair share. I appreciate the concept of the Buffett rule and look forward to seeing more details. And I agree that one of the best investments we all could make is in the infrastructure of this great country.

But as they stand right now, President Obama's proposals are too skewed to appeal to both sides of the aisle. So we see what we see happening again. If we are being serious about addressing our debt and deficits, neither Republicans nor Democrats can propose partisan proposals and then pretend they are credible. We cannot do that any longer. The American people deserve better, and I also know we can do a lot better.

In my short time in Congress, I have seen only one plan that has earned support from Members of both parties. In fact, the President's own bipartisan deficit commission—the Bowles-Simpson group—is the best example of what can be accomplished if we put politics aside and do what is right for our Nation. While no one, including me, will agree with everything in the Bowles-Simpson approach, it at least offered a commonsense, bipartisan template that would cut spending, restore tax fairness, and would help restore fiscal sanity to our Nation.

To date, it is the only plan that has offered a framework that has had bipartisan support from the beginning, and still has it now. But instead of this approach, there are many people on both sides of the aisle who have chosen a path that all but guarantees that Republicans and Democrats will continue to fight over how to solve our fiscal problems, instead of seeking common ground and commonsense solutions. For the sake of our Nation, for our families, we cannot let this happen. We must act, and we must act together.

Looking ahead to the vigorous debates of the fall, my hope is the deficit supercommittee will seize the moment and seek common ground to develop a plan that puts our Nation on the right path to fiscal accountability. Commonsense, to me, is that you would start with a plan that already has bipartisan support because it will take both sides of the aisle to fix this problem.

I urge them and the President to look beyond partisan politics and do what is right for this country. I continue to urge the committee to look past their legal mandate of \$1.5 trillion in savings and revenue and, instead, look for reforms that will create much broader fairness in our system that will lead to deficit reductions of at least \$4 trillion.

I, for one, will work with the Senate Democrats and Republicans who are committed to develop a commonsense debt fix that responsibly reduces spending; makes our tax system more fair, cuts waste, fraud, and abuse, and