

Senate will be in a period of morning business until 4:30 p.m. with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

ENERGY PRICES

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about what people all across the country are talking about; that is, the high price of energy, what people are paying at the pump. I just returned from a week in Alaska. It is fair to say that in a State such as ours, that is as rich as we are with energy wealth, we are being killed by energy prices.

So I wanted to comment on some of the statements the President made over the weekend and Friday when he spoke to the country about energy. I have to tell you, I was pleased to hear the President say he is joining us in an "all-of-the-above approach" to energy. I think that is good news. It is certainly something I have been saying ever since I arrived in the Senate.

It is about domestic production, it is about efficiencies and conservation, and it is about renewables. So that is good. We heard the President say we need to be doing more with oil and gas. You are not going to find any disagreement with me. Wind and solar, nuclear, biofuels, efficiency, this is all good, but the problem we are seeing is the words coming from President Obama are not matching his actions when it comes to what we can be doing with our own domestic production.

I will speak specifically to oil and gas. The actions coming out of the administration, whether through this budget or through some of the other proposals pushing for higher taxes, higher royalties on the industry, when we think about what goes on with the oil and gas leases in the gulf, we have certainly seen the impact flow down there.

In Alaska, we have been pushing, pushing aggressively for 4 years now to get the OCS leases advanced through exploration with Shell, not only 4 years in the process but billions of dollars into a process. We are getting closer, but we are not there yet. With the National Petroleum Reserve Alaska, an area that has been designated by the Congress to explore for production activity, it took almost 2 years to get a bridge across the CD 5, an area where we have an opportunity to continue our exploration—but 2 years to get a simple permit for a bridge.

We all know ANWR has been locked up for decades now. There is incredibly wealthy potential there. Look at the decision on the Keystone XL Pipeline coming out of this administration. When it comes to other areas that are supposedly in "all of the above," nuclear—as much as we might have hoped that this was enjoying a renaissance, we have seen the decision on the shutdown of Yucca Mountain from this administration, the issues as they relate to access to uranium in certain parts of the country.

The rhetoric is not necessarily matching what we are seeing coming out of the administration. This is what is so disturbing to a person like me who comes from an area where we have so much to give, so much to offer.

The President, in his words, said, "There are no quick fixes to this problem." I agree. I absolutely agree. That is why instead of focusing on what could be perceived as a quick fix, such as releasing oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, we need to be focusing on the long-term solution. I keep going back to 1995 when the House and the Senate passed ANWR. It was vetoed by the President shortly thereafter.

Prices at the pump back then were \$1.07 at the pump. The average price today is \$3.65. Think about where we would be if that action had not been vetoed; if the Alaska pipeline, which is now less than half filled, were at full capacity with oil coming out of ANWR.

Just yesterday a colleague of ours from New York sent a letter to Secretary Clinton asking her to pressure Saudi Arabia to pump more oil. In his letter to the Secretary, he said,

I urge the State Department to work with the Government of Saudi Arabia to increase its oil production, as they are currently producing well under their capacity.

Well, our pipeline is certainly well under capacity at 600,000 barrels a day. When we were pushing it through at full tilt, we were over 2 million barrels a day. That is exactly what the Senator from New York has asked Saudi Arabia to do. We could be doing it from Alaska. We could be doing it from this country with our people gaining access to our resources, and we are not doing that.

The President said the Republican plan is just to drill, drill, drill. He said: We hear this every year. Well, why do we hear this every year? We hear it because it is part of the solution. It is not the whole solution, but it is part of the solution, in addition to conservation, efficiency, renewables, and other areas of our domestic production. But drilling is part of the solution. It should not just be part of the rhetoric.

The President said, and I would agree:

The American people are not stupid on this. They know that we are not just going to be able to snap our fingers and have oil coming out of ANWR or having oil coming out of the OCS in the Chukchi or the Beaufort.

They know it takes a while. They know in some cases it might take decades to come. So why would we not start now? If we had started in 1995, think about where we would have been.

He said, "There are no short-term silver bullets." Once again, I agree. But there is a long silver bullet in Alaska, and that is our Trans-Alaska Pipeline that has been moving oil for 30 years now for this country. That silver bullet could be filled, and it would be helping this country just as we are asking for help from Saudi Arabia.

The statement that I think most upset me this weekend was the state-

ment that the President made when he said: Some politicians see this—being higher oil prices—as a political opportunity. He repeated a quote that "Republicans are licking their chops," and stated, "Only in politics do people root for bad news."

Well, the people of my State are not rooting for bad news when it comes to higher energy prices. I will tell you, I am a little offended by the President's statement. I would invite him to come to Alaska, spend a week with me, go to where I was last Saturday in Fairbanks where people are paying \$4.29 for their home heating oil. My sister pays over \$1,000 a month for home heating fuel to fill her tanks. She lives within 20 minutes of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline. You can see it. You can drive by it, this line that is half full, and it is not, again, because we are running out of resources. It is because we have been locked out of ANWR, we have been delayed on NPRA, and we are still waiting on OCS. There are certainly plenty of leases out there. But it is getting the permits out of this administration that has been holding us back from doing more, from doing more to help the people of Alaska and to help the people of this country.

Last month I was out in Bethel in southwest Alaska. There was a native elder who came to a little gathering we had. He is from Eek, AK. He was telling me that he pays \$7.46 for home heating fuel in the village of Eek. That is how they stay warm. When I was there in January, the average temperature for that month was about 20 degrees below zero. He said he has to buy his fuel 10 gallons at a time because that is all he can afford. Then when he does not have any more money, he goes out looking for fire wood for he and his wife. This gentleman, as I said, is an elder, probably 70 years old. But that is how he is living. High energy prices for him are not an opportunity.

Go up to Nome. All eyes of the Nation were on Nome several weeks back when the Coast Guard cutter was escorting the Russian fuel tanker, the Renda, to get to Nome to provide fuel for the community of Nome and the surrounding villages because the winter ice had come in and the winter barge had not been able to make it in with the fuel.

When I was in Nome that afternoon, the price for gas at the pump was \$5.43; the price for diesel was \$5.99.

But it was projected that if they weren't able to fill their tanks, they would see the prices go up to over \$9 a gallon. Think of what that does to your ability to live. Thankfully, the Coast Guard and the fine men and women there were able to see that the community and the villages were taken care of.

I was in Yakutat on Wednesday, a small community that is not accessible by road, as most of our communities aren't. There in Yakutat, they are paying 54 cents a kilowatt hour for energy. Most of their power is diesel-generated

power—54 cents. That is for the businesses that get a subsidy from the State of Alaska for 30 cents a kilowatt hour. The small grocery store we visited paid \$10,000 for its energy prices in January alone—\$10,000 a month for a little grocery store. They are paying \$5.19 a gallon right now, but it is going up with the next fuel barge that comes in.

Alaskans in villages who rely on diesel for their power can pay between 40 and 45 percent of their income for their energy costs. Compare that to the rest of the country, where you are looking at between 3 and 6 percent of your income going toward energy. We are paying almost 50 percent in some of our villages.

Mr. President, I don't view high oil prices as a political opportunity and neither do my constituents. What we view as an opportunity is the resource our State holds—a resource that we continue to be denied access to that opportunity. We learned late last week that the USGS has come back with an estimate that the shale oil in Alaska would come close to 2 billion barrels of oil. ANWR's estimate is about 10.6 billion barrels. In the OCS, we anticipate over 26 billion barrels of oil. We have the resources. We have the ability to access the resources and to do so in an environmentally safe way. This needs to be part of an all-of-the-above solution, in addition to everything we do with renewables and our efficiencies and conservation. We must be doing more domestically. Alaska holds the opportunity.

Again, I agree with the President that there is no short-term fix, but if we don't get started today, there is not going to be a tomorrow for communities such as Yakutat and Eek and Bethel and Fairbanks. We have to get started today.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Arizona is recognized.

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, first let me commend my colleague from Alaska who is seeing this battle of the high price of gasoline firsthand in a State that could contribute greatly to the country's solution to the problem if the President and administration would but let it. I was led on a trip by her father several years ago to the northern part of Alaska, where there are huge untapped reserves that literally, if they had been allowed to be sent to the lower 48 at that time, could have significantly ameliorated the problem we have today. I appreciate her comments. We will talk more about that.

EARNED SUCCESS

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, President Obama has ignited a national debate about the meaning of fairness and American values. In his campaign narrative, "fairness" means greater redistribution of income by the Federal

Government, and expanding government control over the economy represents what he calls a "renewal of American values." He argues that income inequality is the "defining issue of our time"—his words—and that it prevents many Americans from enjoying their right to pursue happiness.

While the President cloaks his rhetoric in the language of liberty—and often misconstrues quotations from Presidents Lincoln and Reagan in the process—his interpretations of key American concepts and values are shallow, materialistic, and distortive of the true American dream.

We don't need more government interventionist and redistributionist policies, which reduce freedom, in order to achieve greater measures of fairness and to pursue happiness. Having the government arbitrarily decide how much money should be taken from person A and given to person B is not fair in any sense of the word, nor does it make Americans happier. Indeed, even though America has become a much wealthier country during the last few decades and average income is higher, studies show that happiness levels have remained unchanged. In 1972, for example, 30 percent of Americans described themselves as happy. In 2004, 31 percent of Americans described themselves that way. That is because, contrary to what President Obama suggests, the key determinant of lasting happiness and satisfaction is not income; rather, it is what American Enterprise Institute president Arthur Brooks calls "earned success." People are happiest when they have earned their income, whatever the level. When the government tries to take all of the trouble out of life by taking care of our every need, it makes earned success that much harder to achieve.

In his 2010 book "The Battle," Brooks describes the connection between earned success and happiness:

Earned success gives people a sense of meaning about their lives. And meaning also is key to human flourishing. It reassures us that what we do in life is of significance and value, for ourselves and those around us. To truly flourish, we need to know that the ways in which we occupy our waking hours are not based on mere pursuit of pleasure or money or any other superficial goal. We need to know that our endeavors have a deeper purpose.

Earned success is attained not simply through one's vocation but also through raising children, donating time to charitable or religious causes, and cultivating strong relationships with friends and family. That is why successful parents and more religious people tend to be very happy.

The earned success that comes from doing a job also explains why self-made millionaires and billionaires continue to work hard after they have earned their fortunes. These people are driven by the satisfaction that comes from creating, innovating, and solving problems. In many cases, they are making products or providing services that improve our quality of life. They are not

content merely to rest on their laurels and enjoy their wealth; they want to continue experiencing the pride and satisfaction that comes from earned success.

The importance of earned success also explains why people who win the lottery usually wind up depressed when they discover that the excitement of being rich and buying things wears off fast. The same is true of recipients of other sources of unearned income. Studies show that welfare programs don't make people happier. We need them to help some people to subsist, but they don't yield true happiness or satisfaction because the money is not earned.

If earned success is the path to happiness, public policies should be geared toward promoting opportunity and freedom for everyone. No economic system does more to promote earned success and freedom than free market capitalism. As social scientist Charles Murray writes in his new book, "Coming Apart":

All the good things in life . . . require freedom in the only way that freedom is meaningful: freedom to act in all arenas of life, coupled with responsibility for the consequences for those actions.

In a true free market system, everyone is guaranteed equal rights and opportunities under the law, all individuals and institutions play by the same rules, and the government acts primarily as a neutral umpire, not a redistributor of income or a venture capitalist. Property rights are upheld, contracts are enforced, and hard work is rewarded. As Brooks points out, free enterprise is the only economic system that addresses the root causes of poverty by enlarging the economic pie rather than allowing government officials and bureaucrats to decide how to slice the existing one.

The President's concept of fairness is different from what most believe. I recently read an anecdote that helps illustrate the fundamental disagreement about the difference between "fair" and "earned." Two siblings are fighting about who gets the last cookie. The brother says he should get it because his sister has already had two and that is not fair. The sister responds that she helped make the cookies, so she earned it. The brother believes it is fair to equalize rewards, regardless of effort. The sister believes in meritocratic fairness—that forced equality is unfair. Those of us who believe in the ultimate fairness of the free market subscribe to the sister's view of meritocratic fairness. She earned it.

Free market capitalism is the most fair system in the world—and the most moral. It is premised on voluntary transactions that make both sides happy by meeting their needs. Unfortunately, the past few years have shown us what unfair economic policies look like.

When the government picks winners and losers in the marketplace, it is being unfair. When it rewards certain