

relationship on TANF, I am putting my colleagues on notice that earlier today I sent President Obama a letter informing him that I will not insist on a vote on my resolution of disapproval during this session of Congress. In the spirit of compromise and bipartisanship, I have asked President Obama to respond to my action by instructing Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius to withdraw the welfare waiver rule and submit a 5-year TANF reauthorization proposal to the Congress. If there are aspects of the welfare waiver rule the administration wishes us to consider, I hope they will include them in their proposal so they can be debated and negotiated here in Congress.

I have written to the President and told him I am committed to working with his administration as well as Chairman CAMP and Chairman BAUCUS to enact comprehensive and meaningful welfare reauthorization early on in the 113th Congress. I made this offer to President Obama with good will and in good faith. However, if the President rebuffs my overture, the Congressional Review Act will afford me this opportunity for another vote on a resolution of disapproval next year. This is because even if the Senate meets in legislative session every day until January 3—including Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, and all weekends—there will not have been 60 session days between the date the welfare waiver rule is deemed to have been submitted to the Senate and the convening of the 113th Congress. Since the 112th Congress will end before the full 60-session-day period has elapsed, the Congressional Review Act provides for another 60-day period to act on a disapproval resolution regarding this rule in 2013. I hope it doesn't come to that. Therefore, if President Obama does not withdraw the welfare waiver rule, submit a 5-year TANF reauthorization plan, and then work with Congress to enact meaningful, comprehensive welfare reform that strengthens work requirements and provides for improved accountability of TANF spending, I will be right back here in a few months exercising my right to demand a vote on a new resolution of disapproval under the Congressional Review Act.

I sincerely hope it does not come to that. As my colleagues know, I have a long history of forging bipartisan compromises on welfare, among many other things. I was a key player during the 1996 consideration of welfare reform that was passed by a Republican Congress and signed by a Democratic President. In 2002, Senator Breaux and I worked with Republicans and Democrats to draft the so-called "tripartisan" agreement on welfare reauthorization. I stand willing to work again on a bipartisan basis on this important issue at this most critical time.

As Members of Congress, I believe we have a moral obligation to do what we can to help those facing staggering

challenges and deep and persistent poverty. We can begin to meet this moral obligation by strengthening and improving the TANF Programs for the working poor, the middle class, and children in the child welfare system.

In America today we have women who take their children with them rummaging through trash cans, hoping to find discarded soda cans so they can sell them back to stores. In America today we have families who every month must make painful decisions about whether to buy food or medicine or whether to pay to heat their home or put gas in their car. Many single moms have no good choices when it comes to providing childcare for their children while they attempt to find work. I can think of no group of Americans more deserving of having the Senate's time and attention directed toward crafting policies designed to help improve their lives.

If my colleagues look over my past 36 years, I have been there for these Americans. I was there in enacting TANF. I was there on a number of child welfare programs. I was there on the Child Care and Development Block Grant. I was there on the Americans With Disabilities Act, and countless other bills. These bills I worked on have helped to make a difference.

But I am concerned that increasingly, we are becoming a welfare society. A lot of people aren't going to go to work, and every time, every quarter, we find more and more people who won't even look for a job anymore. That is not the way to run a great country. That is not the way to help people to be self-sufficient, it is not the way to help people to be self-reliant, and it is not the way to keep a country great.

This is an important issue. I believe everybody in the Senate ought to stand up for the rights of the Congress. And I believe the President can show great good will here if he would do what I have suggested, which I think my Democratic colleagues would appreciate as well, and that is send up the 5-year reauthorization of TANF and of course withdraw that particular approach toward waivers that literally should not ever be granted without congressional consent. I think the President would come a long way by doing that and it would mean a lot to me personally. Let's hope we can get the President to consider these remarks this day because they have been delivered in good faith, hoping we will find solutions to these problems and, above all, hoping we can help our people.

Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. 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 ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business for up to 15 minutes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, in every corner of the globe—from pole to pole, and from the top of our atmosphere to the depths of our oceans—we see evidence of the fundamental changes that are taking place across our Earth.

In 2012, North America experienced a number of unusually severe events and passed several ominous milestones. These episodes have driven a shift in attitude—a realization, really, among Americans. As we head home for the holidays this year, each of us is likely to find back in our home States that more and more people are convinced that climate change is happening, and that it is deadly serious.

Here are just some of the extraordinary events that occurred as we look back on this year, 2012.

January 2012 was the fourth warmest January experienced in the contiguous United States since we began keeping records. And we began keeping records in 1895. By the end of January, snowpack in the Sierra Nevada Mountains was 50 percent less than normal.

February 2012 marked the end of the fourth warmest winter on record—an above-average start to the year but not extremely so.

Then this happened: March 2012. March 2012 was the warmest March on record. Every State in the Nation experienced a record daily high temperature in March. There were 21 instances of nighttime temperatures—nighttime temperatures—being as warm or warmer than the existing daytime record temperature.

It was also in March that a University of Texas poll asked respondents if they thought climate change was occurring. Madam President, 83 percent of Democrats said yes; 60 percent of Independents said yes; 45 percent of Republicans said yes.

As 2012 went on, things did not slow down much for the lower 48 States.

April 2012 would become the third warmest April on record. I came to the floor in April to speak about another milestone surpassed that month. For the first time—for the first time—one of NOAA's remote monitoring sites—this one in the Arctic—recorded a concentration of 400 parts per million of carbon dioxide in the Earth's atmosphere, crushing records that go back 8,000 centuries. For 8,000 centuries mankind has inhabited a planet with an atmosphere with carbon concentration being 170 and 300 parts per million. We have broken out of that. For the

first time, in April, we hit 400 parts per million.

By May, it was no surprise that spring 2012 was a full 2 degrees Fahrenheit warmer than the next warmest spring in recorded history. May was the second warmest ever.

June was only the eighth warmest June, but it officially marked the end of the warmest 12-month period the United States of America has ever experienced.

Across the lower 48, July was not only the warmest July on record, it was the all-time warmest month in America in recorded history. According to the U.S. Drought Monitor, 62.9 percent of the contiguous U.S. was experiencing moderate to exceptional drought by the end of the month—nearly two-thirds. Madam President, 62.9 percent was experiencing moderate to exceptional drought as a result of this being the all-time warmest month.

As the mercury climbed in July, so did agreement among Americans on the crisis of climate change. That University of Texas poll was taken again, and the percentage of Democrats convinced of global climate change had risen to 87 percent in July, up from 83 percent in March. Among Independents, the percentage went from 60 percent up to 72 percent. And Republican believers in climate change became a majority. They went from 45 percent to 53 percent.

By August we had experienced the third hottest summer in the history of the continental United States. In the West, 3.6 million acres were ablaze with wildfires—nearly twice the August average, and the most in the 12-year period of record.

August also brought bad news from the North. The University of Colorado's National Snow and Ice Data Center and NASA announced that Arctic sea ice had reached a record low area of 1.58 million square miles—nearly 70,000 square miles smaller than the previous modern record low. Over the past three decades, average annual temperatures had increased twice as much over the Arctic as over the rest of the world. The average extent of the Arctic sea ice has declined by 25 to 30 percent in that time, and the rate of decline is accelerating.

September 2012. September 2012 was the 16th month in a row that the contiguous United States recorded an above 20th century average temperature.

October finally ended that record streak with a temperature across the lower 48 that was 0.3 degrees Fahrenheit below the long-term average. But October also brought us, as the Acting President pro tempore so well knows, Hurricane Sandy, Superstorm Sandy. It was the largest Atlantic hurricane on record, claiming more than 100 lives, and the second costliest. The cleanup in my home State of Rhode Island and across the east coast—I know most agonizingly in New York and New Jersey—is still underway. This week in

the Senate we are working to approve a \$60 billion aid package which will help restore that damage.

HAZARD MITIGATION

Let me step aside of my climate remarks and speak for 1 minute to that because as we consider this supplemental appropriations bill, long-term mitigation must be part of this discussion. We should not replace and rebuild what was damaged just as it was. We need to replace and rebuild smarter. Sandy is a preview of what is to come. Infrastructure that failed or flooded should be replaced to higher standards; at-risk roads, wastewater treatment plants, and other utilities need to be relocated to safer places.

If disaster strikes, as it has, and we do not plan ahead, as we are being urged not to, we will squander Federal dollars. A 2005 study by the National Institute of Building Sciences showed FEMA hazard mitigation efforts yielded an average cost-benefit ratio of 4 to 1—\$4 saved for every \$1 spent. Let's not be foolish.

A prime example of this sort of smart planning was in the Acting President pro tempore's home State at Point Lookout, Lido Beach, and Atlantic Beach. These communities invested in sand dune buffers—sand dune habitat buffers. When Sandy came, they suffered relatively little damage compared to nearby Long Beach, which had decided against maintaining a sand dune buffer and ended up with an estimated \$200 million in property and infrastructure damage.

Coastal wetlands act like sponges during flooding events. They absorb water. They dissipate wave energy. They protect against storm surge. They are an important part of our coastal defenses in coastal States. Natural dune systems on barrier islands and beaches do the same. They are part of our natural defense against coastal storms. These natural defenses must be protected and strengthened for our future safety. And I hope that even Senators who come from landlocked States can appreciate what this means in coastal States.

So back to Sandy. While it is impossible to say specifically that climate change caused Superstorm Sandy, we know that warmer oceans, warmer, moister air, and higher sea level all add to the power and danger of these extreme storms. We know that climate change "loads the dice" for such storms.

Madam President, 2012 marched us past even more portentous milestones. NOAA reported that November 2012 was the 333rd month in a row—the 333rd month in a row—that the global monthly temperature was above the 20th century average. The Earth has not seen a single month below 20th century average temperatures since February of 1985. Some of these interns and pages here were born after that. They have lived their entire lives in that environment.

According to the National Climate Data Center, 2012 is set to be the warm-

est calendar year on record for the contiguous United States. December would have to be one full degree Fahrenheit colder than the coldest December on record to prevent that from happening and make up for the exceptionally hot first 8 months of the year.

The overwhelming majority of scientific research indicates that these observed changes in the Earth's atmosphere are the direct result of human activity; namely, the emission of carbon dioxide from the burning of fossil fuels.

Just last week, Dr. James Powell, former Reagan and George H.W. Bush appointee to the National Science Board, released a new review of the scientific literature, in which he searched for articles that expressly reject human-caused global warming or propose an alternate explanation. He looked at 13,950 peer-reviewed climate articles—nearly 14,000 peer-reviewed climate articles. Madam President, 24—24—either rejected global warming trends or denied the human contribution to warming.

I am not even sure if viewers looking at this on C-SPAN can see it, but on this circle pie graph I have in the Chamber, this little red line depicts the 24 articles out of the 14,000. It is a tiny fringe.

The science is clear, and more and more Americans accept that the science is clear behind climate change. An AP poll out just last week found that 78 percent of Americans accept the reality of climate change.

The findings, like the University of Texas poll, break it down by political party: 83 percent of Democrats, 77 percent of Independents, and 70 percent of Republicans. So the real debate in this country is not whether humans are altering our climate but how severely we will do so and how as a society we will respond to this challenge.

Although some Members of this Chamber continue to deny the existence of climate change, Americans are aware that our Nation is vulnerable to extreme weather events. They are aware that climate change loads the dice. They are aware that carbon pollution continues unabated, and they are aware that Congress has failed to act.

The public is ready for us to take action, but we are not. We are, as I have said in a previous speech, sleepwalking. As Congress sleepwalks, Americans actually are taking action on their own. In coordination with the nonprofit organization 350.org, for example, students at more than 150 colleges and universities across the country are pressing those institutions to sell off the portions of their endowment portfolios that are invested in fossil fuel companies. These students are imploring their schools to weigh the real cost of climate change against the drive for greater financial returns and divest from the polluters.

This type of divestment campaign was employed effectively in the 1980s to pull investment from South Africa during apartheid. With American college

and university endowments estimated to total more than \$400 billion, this movement by students deserves significant attention.

In the Senate key legislation such as the Water Resources Development Act must reflect the reality that our climate and environment are changing, that we need to prepare for these changes. We should take direct legislative action to mitigate climate change. We should defend the administration's carbon pollution standards which will require new and existing powerplants to clean up their smokestacks.

The United States must support the Department of Defense, the world's single largest consumer of oil, as a leader in energy efficiency and alternative fuel development for our national security sake. We must extend the production tax credit as our colleague, Senator MARK UDALL of Colorado, has so often and so eloquently pressed us to do. The American Wind Energy Association is pushing for a 6-year extension of the production tax credit to grow a vibrant wind power industry in America.

A greener economy provides a cleaner and safer future for Americans. More Americans already work in the green industries than in the fossil fuels industry. A Brookings Institution report found the clean economy employs 2.7 million workers. That is manufacturing and exports, the kind of jobs that support a strong middle class. But in Congress we are sleepwalking through history. We are sleepwalking through history, and we must wake up; awaken to our duties, awaken to our responsibilities, awaken to the plain facts that lay all around us if only we would open our eyes and see them.

The public has every reason to want to grab us and give us a good shake. We are sleepwalking through this era, lulled as we sleepwalk by the narcotics of corporate money, corporate money out of the polluters and their allies. We are lulled by the narcotics of manufactured doubt planted in a campaign of disinformation by those same polluters and allies. But history is calling us loudly and clearly. History is shouting in our ears. We are oblivious, sleepwalking along.

The people across the country and around the world are counting on us. They are imploring us. We have responsibilities to them. Yet in Congress, we ignore the facts. We ignore our duties. We sleepwalk on. It is irresponsible and it is wrong.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Montana.

REMEMBERING DANIEL K. INOUE

Mr. BAUCUS. Madam President, I would like to say a few words about our close, beloved friend, colleague, Danny Inouye. I am hard pressed to think of anyone in this body I respected and loved more than Danny Inouye. His broad smile, his desire to work with

you, help you, his interest in finding common ground, his decency, his honesty, his forthrightness, and his dedication to service is unsurpassed.

Someone pointed out to me that when Dan was first chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, he passed all of the measures through his committee virtually unanimously. We should stop and think about that for just a second. This place is now so polarized, it is so difficult to get measures passed. But Dan, as committee chairman, worked with his members so virtually every bill in his first year was passed unanimously. There was one that was 29 to 1.

If only we would stop and reflect on that a bit, it would help us to work better together. Dan also worked very closely with Ted Stevens. One time Ted was chairman of the Appropriations Committee, another time the ranking member. The two of them worked very closely together to get measures passed through the Appropriations Committee. Other committees do the same; the chairman and the ranking member work well together. Regrettably, those measures then come out to the floor and become very polarized. That toxic dynamic of this echo chamber, Washington, DC, takes over once measures get on the floor.

Everyone will talk about Danny as a military hero. He certainly was in so many respects. When Pearl Harbor was bombed, he tried to sign up, and he was refused because he was Japanese American. The Japanese were the enemy. But he and others petitioned the President and he was able to finally sign up.

Danny served his country, our country, fully over in Italy, losing an arm. He was such a hero, storming several German machine-gunner nests. He was so brave because he was American. He was fighting for his country.

Some may have mentioned, or some might in the future mention, Danny's statement to many of us who went to a Prayer Breakfast a few months ago. Dan did not ever go to any Prayer Breakfasts, but he went to one. He wanted to explain why he did something. It was one of the more touching moments in my memory here. It is when Danny went through a bit of his life, explaining how he was—in Hawaii, in a foster home or an orphanage, something similar to that, and a bishop would come by monthly to each of the young children, and say: What can I do for you, young lady; you, young man?

Danny right away said: I want a home. And Danny explained how he then went to live in the Security home, raised by nuns. That went a long way to help Danny appreciate and understand decency, working together, community. It meant a lot to him.

Later, at Pearl Harbor he wanted to sign up. He did and served. But when he explained all of this to us, he then mentioned how he stormed—he was a very good shot. He was an excellent shot. He was a marksman. He was a sharpshooter. He recounted the first German he shot and killed in Italy.

At that moment he was pretty proud of himself, very patriotic. I am a good shot. I am an American. I got that German. They were engaged with the enemy frequently. He shot a few more Germans. One time he stormed a tower. There was a machine gunner up in the tower. Danny rushed up. Prior to that time, one of the soldiers threw a grenade or shot a bazooka. It blew up most of the Germans there in that tower.

Danny stormed up the stairway, got up there and there was one still alive. Danny's immediate reaction was to use the butt of his gun to hit the soldier so the soldier could not shoot him. Well, at that moment, the soldier then reached into his pocket and pulled out photographs, photographs of the soldier's family, the soldier's mother, the soldier's brothers and sisters and children.

Danny, in that instant, it was like an epiphany. He then realized he was not shooting the enemy, he was not shooting soldiers, he was not racking up statistics, he was killing people, a person, a real live person. It hit him so hard he then decided he had to leave. He had to stop this. He could not go on killing people.

He went to the chaplain and said: Chaplain, I have to leave.

The chaplain said: Well, I understand. That is your right. But maybe it is best if you stay in the service.

Danny stayed. Danny said a lot of people count sheep going to sleep at night. Danny stayed awake at night. He could not sleep. He was counting the soldiers he shot and killed, and that had a huge, profound effect on him.

Years later, the Senate was debating the Iraq war resolution. Senator Byrd walked up to Senator Inouye. Senator Byrd, as we will recall, was very much opposed to the United States entering the war in Iraq. He stood up on the Senate floor and very eloquently explained why it was the wrong thing to do—the United States should not send troops over to Iraq.

Well, Senator Byrd walked over to Danny and said: Danny, I have to ask you if you can support this resolution. I know you cannot because, my gosh, you are a war hero and given your military service.

Danny right away said: Oh, no, I will vote with you because it is the right thing to do. It is wrong for the United States to send troops over to Iraq.

Danny said it was largely because of that experience, when that soldier reached in his pocket and showed him photographs of his family, that it just changed him. It changed Danny and made Danny realize the importance of not going to war unless it is absolutely, totally necessary, and going to Iraq was not necessary.

I was so impressed with Danny in so many different ways. When I was first here, Danny was assigned to defend Harrison Williams who was charged with ABSCAM violations. I remember,