

sector, 7 percent; residential and commercial building, 11 percent.

We know President Obama has done an amazing job in leading us, with Members here in the Senate, bipartisan. Senators SNOWE and FEINSTEIN worked so hard on this. He said it is time for us to get better fuel economy. Fuel efficiency is going to take carbon out of the air, and we are moving toward 55 miles per gallon. That is excellent. And we can continue to make great progress as we move toward plug-in hybrids—I drive one of those myself—and eventually electric cars. I can tell you, when you drive those cars, you don't visit those gas stations. It saves you money. It is a win-win. The environment gets cleaned up. You save money. It is all good.

We know the electricity sector is complicated, but what we want to do—many of us here—is to say: If you put a price on carbon, it will move us away from the dirtiest types of electricity production toward clean, clean electricity.

That is what we are trying to do. So Senator SANDERS wrote a very strong bill of which I am a cosponsor. It would put a price on carbon and we would take the funds we get from that price on carbon—I think it is \$20 a ton when you start—and it will bring in many billions. What we will do with it is 60 percent of it will go to the people to soften the blow of higher electricity prices until we have moved to clean energy. We have to move on this.

On residential and commercial buildings, I have a bill to move forward through the GSA, the biggest landlord in the country, and we can move forward with economies to those buildings by making sure the windows do not let in all that air or let all that heat escape, we can make those weather-related improvements and we can encourage them to move to solar and other ways. The industrial sector is the same. Once there is a price on carbon, they will move toward putting solar and the rest.

In closing, we have one self-inflicted wound called the sequester. We can get out of it easily by working together on deficit reduction in a balanced way and stop these mindless cuts that hurt the people of our Nation, the children of our Nation, the seniors of our Nation, law enforcement of our Nation—our busiest airports, trains, and the rest. We can avoid all that if we are smart and we say we want a balanced approach.

I believe if we recognize what USA Today is saying, which is we should sweat climate change because it is happening now, if we can come together we can move forward and do our part. We just heard, in the Environment and Public Works Committee—I am proud to chair it—we heard from four scientists. They were asked if we do nothing what will happen. They said parts of our Nation will not exist anymore. Imagine hearing people say no more Atlantic City, no more New Orleans. In Florida—you wouldn't recognize it.

That is the first answer. We did not even get to what happens in the West.

We know from Senators such as TOM UDALL what would happen to that beautiful State of New Mexico. It would become a desert environment; no more green, and the fires have already been starting. I am sad to say we have done little to nothing. I can only say this President has done whatever he could do. Any progress we have had has come from his executive orders and, I might add, the States.

My home State of California is moving forward, creating jobs in clean energy, moving forward, being a model, and I am going to support them and our Governor, Jerry Brown. He gets this. It doesn't take a degree in climatology to see what is happening to our climate—and it is happening. We understand it.

I saw a movie, "Chasing Ice." O God, if you have not seen it, I suggest you watch it. This is a great photographer who goes to four different places, including Montana, Greenland, Iceland, and Alaska. He puts these cameras up there to watch the glaciers. You see what happens over 2 years. These glaciers are disappearing. This is not some kind of cry for attention on my part. I love my grandkids, and I want them to have a planet that is habitable for them. They deserve that. They are going to look back to this time someday and say: My goodness, what were they thinking?

It is not too late for us. With USA Today leading the way, I think we can turn public opinion around and get going on this issue.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

(The remarks of Mrs. GILLIBRAND pertaining to the introduction of S. 443 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF CAITLIN JOAN HALLIGAN TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA CIRCUIT

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have been told the Republicans are not able to clear an agreement for consideration of the Halligan nomination. Therefore, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 13 and proceed in executive session to do that.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on the motion to proceed.

Without objection, the motion is agreed to. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Caitlin Joan Halligan, of New York, to be a United States Circuit Judge for the District of Columbia Circuit.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DONNELLY). The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Caitlin Joan Halligan, of New York, to be United States Circuit Judge for the District of Columbia Circuit.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Barbara Boxer, Benjamin L. Cardin, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Bill Nelson, Barbara A. Mikulski, Amy Klobuchar, Al Franken, Jack Reed, Sheldon Whitehouse, Robert Menendez, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Richard Blumenthal, Max Baucus, Sherrod Brown, Dianne Feinstein

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the quorum under rule XXII be waived.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now proceed to legislative session.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

TRIBUTE TO ROSSI RALENKOTTER

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise to recognize a milestone in Nevada history as my friend Rossi Ralenkotter celebrates 40 years with the tourism industry. As president of the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority, LVCVA, Rossi has been influential in transforming Las Vegas into a globally recognized brand and an entertainment destination. I am proud to honor him today.

After moving to Las Vegas in 1951 and graduating from Bishop Gorman High School, Rossi served our Nation in the United States Air Force. Upon returning home to Southern Nevada, he entered the tourism industry. Las Vegas hasn't been the same since.

Rossi championed the use of research and data in developing advertising and marketing strategies for Southern Nevada. He helped establish the LVCVA's research department in the early 1970's.

This innovative approach transformed advertising and marketing for the LVCVA.

Rossi was part of the effort to bring professional sports to Southern Nevada and he convinced the Triple-A baseball affiliate in Spokane, WA, to move to Las Vegas. He worked in partnership with other communities to bring NASCAR and the NBA All-Star Game to Southern Nevada. When the National Finals Rodeo outgrew Oklahoma City, Rossi helped persuade the event to make Las Vegas its new home.

By the 1990s, Rossi was overseeing incredible growth in Southern Nevada's tourism industry and changing the face of Las Vegas from a regional gaming market into an international resort destination. Rossi was part of the team that developed the most successful tourism ad campaign in history. Today, Las Vegas is synonymous with "What happens here, stays here." Rossi was named Co-Brand Marketer of the Year by Brandweek magazine for his work with this advertising campaign.

Every resident of Clark County has benefited from Rossi's successful marketing and branding effort. Tourism supports jobs for 370,000 Southern Nevada residents and generates more than \$41 billion for the local economy. Today, 20 of the world's 27 largest hotels and resorts are located on Las Vegas Strip. And our resorts count on Rossi and the LVCVA to help fill rooms. Under Rossi's leadership, Las Vegas has also transformed itself from a weekend destination into the number one trade show destination in North America for 18 consecutive years. With the slogan "Vegas means business," Rossi and his team have attracted and signed multiyear contracts to host major conventions from the Consumer Electronics Show to the International Apparel show known as MAGIC.

Rossi's magic touch and marketing brilliance caught the attention of national leaders in the tourism industry. Last year, Rossi became the chairman of our Nation's largest tourism group, US Travel. He was appointed to the Commerce Department's Travel and Tourism Advisory Board and serves as a delegate to the White House Conference on Tourism. The American Marketing Association and the Travel and Tourism Research Association have both presented Rossi with a Lifetime Achievement Award.

While everyone knows that "What happens in Vegas, stays in Vegas," it is my honor to make sure that what has happened on Rossi's watch is properly recognized. On behalf of the U.S. Senate, I am proud to congratulate Rossi Ralenkotter on 40 years in the tourism industry. All Nevadans have benefited from his leadership at the LVCVA and I look forward to many more years of working together.

S. 415, THE SMALL BUSINESS DISASTER RECOVERY ACT

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I am pleased to join the Senator from Lou-

isiana in introducing the Small Business Disaster Recovery Act. The purpose of this bill is to streamline certain burdensome procedures for small businesses that are affected by a Presidentially declared disaster. This bill would complement provisions adopted by this body and enacted into law earlier this year that the Senator from Louisiana and I sponsored to improve FEMA procedures. Like the bill we are introducing today, we derived these provisions from our States' experiences with Hurricane Katrina. They will not cost anything, but they will improve government services at times when they are most critical.

Through two budget-neutral provisions, this bill continues to improve the way we respond and recover from disasters using the lessons that we have learned from past disasters. Current practice dictates that small business owners can only use their homes as collateral for a post-disaster loan. The legislation's first provision clarifies that the collateral requirement for SBA disaster loans can include business assets of actual value other than a primary residence. This removes a key obstacle to small business owners who want to restart operations after a disaster but are unable or unwilling to use their homes when they could conceivably provide sufficient business assets as collateral for the loan.

The bill clearly states that these assets should be of equal or greater value to the amount of the loan and ensures that the Small Business Administration is responsive to the needs of small businesses seeking disaster loans less than the maximum allowable. I encourage the Small Business Administration to ensure that the asset requirements for collateral are established in a way that minimizes any potential waste, fraud, and abuse. This bill will maintain the traditional standards for appropriate collateral assets, which includes commercial real estate, machinery and equipment, business inventory, and furniture and fixtures.

The second provision included in this legislation addresses assistance provided by small business development centers, or SBDCs, to out-of-State businesses. It seeks to repeal processes that discourage SBDCs to work across State lines when doing so actually makes good sense. Sharing resources and knowledge across State lines is essential when disasters overwhelm local capacity or expertise. This legislation has the support of the Association of Small Business Development Centers and the International Economic Development Council because it encourages such information and resource sharing.

I am pleased to join the distinguished Senator from Louisiana in encouraging States and SBDC networks to formalize partnerships across State lines before disasters strike. We are both aware that any action or decision that takes place prior to a disaster is an action that does not waste time or resources during a time of crisis. The

Emergency Management Assistance Compact system shows how well this can work.

I thank the Senator from Louisiana and her staff for working with me and my staff to make sure that this legislation addresses the need for SBDCs to be properly reimbursed for work when they appropriately respond to concerns in another state.

The reforms in this bill represent commonsense lessons that we have learned from our constituents after experiencing the effects of some of the most severe natural disasters in our Nation's history. I urge serious consideration of this legislation and invite other Senators to cosponsor this bill.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

OBSERVING RARE DISEASE DAY

• Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, since 2009, the last day of February has been observed as National Rare Disease Day to raise awareness of and provide support for Americans living with a rare disease or disorder.

By definition, each rare disease or disorder affects a small patient population, less than 200,000 people. However, the combined 7,000 individual rare diseases affect nearly 30 million Americans. Sadly, children with rare genetic diseases account for more than half of the rare disease population.

Many of these rare diseases are serious, even life-threatening: epidermolysis bullosa; progeria; muscular dystrophy; sickle cell anemia; Tay-Sachs; cystic fibrosis; many childhood cancers; and fibrodysplasia ossificans progressiva.

Patients with rare diseases face unique challenges. Too many of these conditions lack effective treatments and cures. And too often people with rare diseases experience challenges in obtaining an accurate diagnosis. In addition, there is often difficulty finding physicians or treatment centers with the necessary expertise in rare diseases or disorders.

Great strides have been made in research and treatment as the result of the Orphan Drug Act, legislation passed in 1983 to encourage pharmaceutical companies to bring treatments for rare diseases to market.

This year, the Rare Disease Day Resolution also pays tribute to the 30th Anniversary of the Orphan Drug Act and calls for us to reflect upon the successes of that Act and the challenges to be addressed in the future to prevent, identify, combat, and treat rare diseases.

Rare Disease Day is also an important opportunity to honor lifesaving advances in science and research that continue to transform the diagnosis, treatment, and standard of care for many orphan diseases, thanks in no small part to the advocacy efforts of the National Institutes of Health, the medical community, patients and their