

Afghanistan, and even Iraq. While NATO's Secretary General has expressed support for consequences, NATO's North Atlantic Council, which is the body that approves military action for NATO, has not approved this military action. The Arab League has condemned with words the use of chemical weapons, but there is yet to be any Arab League statement that explicitly endorses military action or promises to be engaged in that action. Even our ally who has been most supportive, France, has asked for a delay to allow the U.N. inspectors to deliver their report next week.

Let me add that I believe that report early next week will verify that it was the Asad regime that used sarin gas. That is my expectation.

A military strike may well enforce the international norm with respect to chemical weapons, but at the same time it would weaken the international norm of limiting military action to instances of self-defense or those cases where we have the support of the international community or at least our allies in NATO or the Arab League.

In addressing this difficult and tragic crisis in Syria, the administration initially presented us with only two choices: Take military action or make no response at all. I reject and have rejected from the start the notion that the United States has only two choices—undertaking an act of war or doing nothing in response to President Asad's attack on his citizens. There are a variety of nonmilitary responses to consider that may well be more effective. The most promising of these options, proposed by the Russians—one of Asad's strongest allies—would place Syria's chemical weapons stockpile in the custody of the international community before they would ultimately be destroyed.

I am not naive about "trusting" the Russians. My point is that this option may well be in Russia's own interests, would be more effective in securing the stockpile of chemical weapons in Syria, and would involve the international community. This diplomatic alternative would put Syria's chemical weapons under verified international control and would once and for all prevent Asad or anyone else in Syria from using those weapons. A risk of attacking Asad's facilities is that the chemical weapons could fall into the hands of terrorist elements in the country. That risk would be eliminated if the weapons were removed completely from Syria.

One of the arguments advanced by proponents of the authorization for the use of military force resolution is that America's credibility is on the line. This is a legitimate concern. To be sure, it was unfortunate that the President drew a line in the sand without first having a well-vetted plan, consulting with Congress, and obtaining the necessary support for doing so. I would maintain, however, that the credibility of our great Nation is be-

yond that of just one statement by the President, even in his important capacity as Commander in Chief. The credibility of the United States is backed by a military that is the most advanced and capable in the world. The strength of our military sends the clear, unmistakable message that the United States is capable of exerting overwhelming force whenever we decide it is the right thing to do and it is necessary to do so. It would be a mistake for our adversaries to interpret a single vote regarding a military response to Syria's chemical weapons program as having ramifications for our willingness to use force when our country or our allies face direct imminent threats, especially with regard to the proliferation of nuclear weapons and intercontinental ballistic missile capabilities.

At the very least we have an obligation to pursue all nonmilitary options that may well be more effective in preventing the future use of Asad's chemical weapons than the military option the President has proposed to undertake.

For these reasons, should the authorization for the use of military force approved by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee come to the Senate floor, I shall cast my vote in opposition.

My hope, however, is that the negotiations underway with the Russians will pave the way for the removal of chemical stockpiles from Syria and for their verified ultimate destruction. That is the best outcome for this crisis. That would lead to a safer world.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I understand that Members can speak for up to 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

WRDA

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I would like to speak about an issue completely separated from the international concerns we all share because closer to home there was an action taken today by the House of Representatives that has me extremely concerned as the senior Senator from Louisiana and a leader in our delegation and is an issue I have worked on literally since the first day I came to the Senate now almost 17 years ago.

Today, the House of Representatives, unfortunately, in presenting their WRDA bill, which was a bill that was negotiated at great length with great skill by Senator BARBARA BOXER, the chair of the committee of jurisdiction, and the ranking member, Senator VITTER, who did an outstanding job for the country and for Louisiana, negotiated quite skillfully a bill that was very balanced.

It contained no earmarks, as have been eliminated by the majority of the Congress. It did give a green light for projects that had received a positive

Chief's report, which is the signal to go forward with the project for flood protection or navigation or dredging under the jurisdictions of the Corps of Engineers.

Unfortunately, for unexplained public reasons today, which we will find out as soon as we can and report, the House of Representatives, the leadership, decided to drop probably the most important project in the bill for Louisiana, and that project is Morganza to the Gulf. The saddest part about all of this, the House removing this project, this project has already been authorized three times in the last 15 years by the Senate and twice by the House of Representatives.

The people who would be benefited by this project, about 200,000 people who live in south Louisiana, Lafourche Parish and Terrebonne Parish, the same area that was battered by Katrina, Rita, Gustav, Ike, and the oilspill, the same people who have suffered through flood after flood after flood, the same people who have taxed themselves, gotten \$200 million of their own money to build phase 1, have now been told no by the House of Representatives.

For what reasons I cannot understand. They have gone through all of the processes required. They have waited in line, a line that should never have been there because they were given a yes. But as the Presiding Officer knows, under the Corps of Engineers' rules, they can say yes to your project initially and then it takes so long to get to your project because we have a very inefficient system. If the estimates then come in at 20 percent over the original estimate, the law kicks you out and you have to start all over. So they started all over. That is the tragedy of this action. We were furious they had to start all over, but that was the law. So they did. They got a positive Chief's report in June.

The House of Representatives just arbitrarily decides, even with a positive Chief's report, they are taking Morganza to the Gulf out of the bill. I am calling on the Louisiana delegation to stand, particularly members who are in the study committee. I think we have a leader of that committee, Congressman STEVE SCALISE, who was my partner in the RESTORE Act and has been a very able leader in our delegation, to absolutely put their foot down on this WRDA bill moving any further in the House of Representatives until we can get justice for this project.

Our people are doing everything we can to elevate our homes, to fight for fair flood insurance, to tax ourselves to build levees. We have traveled all over the world to find the best engineers in the Netherlands because we do not seem to have enough engineers in Washington who understand that you can live safely below sea level. Sometimes you have to because that is where the ports are. We do not have the luxury of living on tops of mountains. We are running the Mississippi River. We are not running a ski lodge

in Vail. So our people have to live there. They are not living in mansions. They are not living in condos. They are living in fishing villages and fishing camps and in very middle-class neighborhoods, trying to make a living for themselves, their families, their communities and keep this country operating.

We are running the biggest oil and gas operations out of Houma, LA, the town the House of Representatives has just literally made defenseless. They have no levees. New Orleans now, after Katrina, and Jefferson Parish, and Saint Bernard Parish have \$14 billion of taxpayer money invested. That is a lot of money. I know some people in the country get very aggravated about that. Why did they get \$14 billion?

The country should have given us \$1 billion 10 years ago and we could have saved them 14. But the Congress decided not to do that. We asked. We begged. We pleaded. No. No. No. No. So one day the levees broke. Then the bill came due. It was a big bill, \$14 billion. Wait until the next bill comes through. In that whole timeframe, that whole timeframe where our people are begging, drowning, houses going underwater, begging for help, the government keeps telling us no, no, we sent \$161 billion to this Treasury from off our shore, from offshore oil and gas—\$161 billion.

We come up here and try to get \$1 billion for this levee, \$2 billion for that. We are told: We cannot afford it. I tell you, I do not have the power to do this. I do not. But if I did, and if I were the Governor, I—and I do not think he has the power—but if I could, I would shut down every rig in the Gulf of Mexico until this Congress gives the people of Louisiana the money we need to keep ourselves safe from drowning, from flooding.

I would turn the lights off in Washington and in New York and in Maine. We are tired of it. The people in our State cannot survive without levees. The country cannot survive without our people living where we do, to run the maritime, to run the oil and gas industry. Houma, LA, does not deserve this. Terrebonne Parish does not deserve it. Lafourche Parish does not deserve it. Our delegation is not going to stand for it.

So my message to the Speaker of the House and my delegation in the House and the House is that bill will never see the light of day unless Morganza is put back. I do not know who is going to do it or how they are going to do it.

Please do not tell me there is not enough money. We send alone, Louisiana—forget Texas, forget Alabama, forget Mississippi—Louisiana alone every year sends about \$5 billion to the Federal Treasury just from oil and gas severance taxes, not counting sales tax, income tax, property taxes, other taxes—property taxes would not come here, but income taxes would come here, corporate income taxes would come here. That is not even counting that.

I am tired of begging for nickels and dimes. So the House of Representatives better put Morganza to the Gulf back into that bill. No. 2, I have not read the whole bill. I was just informed about it. So I may have to take this back off the record. But I was told also what they did is say: We are not going to approve projects that had a Chief's report after our committee meeting in June. Then they put some language in that says something like: No project can go forward until they have a committee meeting of the House of Representatives.

So they are basically engaging in earmarks again. In other words, having voted to take earmarks out—I was not for that. I did not go along with that, but they did, the leadership of the House, take earmarks out. They are now trying to put earmarks back in. So the only way you get back in is if you go through their committee and get your project approved, which is earmarking in a different way.

So on two fronts I think the House is wrong. I think they were wrong to take Morganza out, wrong to put this new system in.

The third and final thing I am going to say about this, which is the saddest thing, because Morganza has to go back in, there are some other projects they might have taken out that I am simply not aware of. But I know that the bill that left this Senate was very fair. It was without earmarks. It was based on the science and the process of the Corps of Engineers. But to all of my friends in the Senate, even when I get Morganza back in there, and our delegation does, the problem for all of us is that there is still going to be \$60 billion of authorized projects for all of our States. The total budget of the Corps of Engineers next year that Senator FEINSTEIN chairs—and I serve on the appropriations committee for the Corps of Engineers—will have only \$1.6 billion for new construction.

The total Corps budget is only about \$5 billion. So think about it. Is this not the silliest thing? We have \$40 billion of already authorized WRDA projects. The WRDA bill now has \$20 billion minus Morganza to the Gulf, which they just took out for no good reason, after 20 years of our people suffering. So they are going to add that 20 plus Morganza which will get back in there. Then we are going to have \$60 billion, and all we have is a few billion to fund it.

It is a system that is so broken and so unfair. Every State feels this. It is not just Louisiana. What people hear is my strong voice, I hope, for the people of Louisiana. We feel it the most. We feel it most frequently just because of our geography. But every community in the country is suffering from this. We do not have enough infrastructure, water infrastructure. Our ports are not where they need to be. Our rivers are not dredged to the depths they need to be. We do not have enough to maintain our maritime industry in this country.

This is undermining our economic strength and our international competitiveness, besides being terribly unfair to people who happen to live along the coast, which is 60 percent of our population. So I am just sending a little warning signal to the House of Representatives: There is no way, no way, that this WRDA bill is going to go anywhere without the Morganza to the Gulf in it. It is not happening. This is one of those sort of do or die kind of issues for the Louisiana delegation.

We have waited 20 years for this project. It is justified from every angle, shape, form. It has been studied to death. The local people have put up \$200 million of their own money. I am not going home to tell them they are not going to get the project. So I would strongly suggest our House delegation, particularly our leader STEVE SCALISE, the Congressman from Jefferson Parish, who is the chairman of the Republican study group, go have a long talk with the chairman of the committee and figure out how to get this project back in the bill.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Ms. LANDRIEU. I wish to move to another subject. I wish to offer at this time two amendments to the underlying bill that we are trying to debate, which is a very important bill on energy efficiency. I know we cannot debate any amendments, but I think I can offer two amendments.

I wish to tell my colleagues, the first I am offering with Senator WICKER and Senator PRYOR. It would ensure that the Green Building Rating System, which is adopted by GSA currently, and new ones under this bill that are put forth by Senator SHAHEEN and Senator PORTMAN—I support the bill—do not put at a disadvantage the materials that meet the new standard of energy efficiency in the underlying bill.

There was some question about the way the bill was initially worded when it came out of the Energy Committee that it would disqualify some domestic materials that meet the energy efficient standards from being included. This would have a very devastating effect on our lumber and forestry industry, as well as others. I will send that amendment to the desk when I am able and hope that we will get through this skirmish over health care and get to some very important amendments that will help us create jobs in America, Louisiana, and help our industries.

Secondly, I wish to speak about an amendment Senator WICKER and I will offer that would ensure that small companies are excused from the requirements to submit their products for expensive third-party testing to achieve ENERGY STAR certification.

This is really a small business issue. I think this is acceptable to all parties. I am not sure there is any opposition, actually, to either one of these amendments, which is good. We have worked very hard with the parties who might