

know are needed and I know are needed so we will have that program for the long haul.

I commend my side of the aisle, and I commend your side of the aisle. We acknowledge that we need some revenues, whether it is on the tax expenditure side, the deductions and loopholes and so forth, or finding other ways to raise revenue.

Third, we just came from a press conference this morning with Congressman ISSA, Congressman CUMMINGS, Senator COBURN, and myself to focus on the GAO and their high-risk list, high-risk ways for wasting money. That comes out today. Every 2 years they give us this high-risk list for how to find ways to save money and spend our tax dollars more efficiently.

We have all that working together, those three things: entitlement reform, some additional revenues, and actually looking in every nook and cranny to see how we can get a better result for less money. Those we can do together. My colleague and I have worked on some things together, and I want to work on those with the Senator, and I look forward to that. I think that if we do, a lot of our colleagues will join us.

Mr. CORNYN. Would the Senator yield for a question?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican Whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I would like to tell the distinguished Senator from Delaware how much I appreciate him and his friendship, and it is genuine.

I guess the thing that is so maddening about serving in the Senate is that everyone in this body—the Senator from Delaware, the Senator from New Hampshire—everyone who serves in this body understands the problems that confront our country that he so eloquently described in terms of unfunded liabilities for Medicare and Social Security, which are on a path to bankruptcy, the debt, and just imagine, if interest rates were to go up, what that would mean in terms of our ability to fund everything from safety net programs to national defense.

But it never seems to happen. The date never seems to arrive when we actually sit down and address it. And I believe this number of days without a budget is really symptomatic of the problem. But thanks to our colleagues across the Capitol—who passed a “no budget, no pay” bill, which has now been signed by the President—unless Congress passes a budget, we are not going to get paid, which is entirely appropriate and long overdue.

So I would just say to my friend, and he is my friend, that I appreciate his comments. I hope someday soon we can find a way, Republicans and Democrats alike—that is the only way it is going to happen—I hope we can get serious about this. Unfortunately, it hasn't happened yet. I am an optimist. I think it can happen. But it is going to require Presidential leadership, and, frankly, that is one reason I wish the

President would get off the campaign trail. Now that he has won—he has another 4-year term—he doesn't have to worry about running for election again, but then to work with us because that is the only way it is going to happen.

So I appreciate his comments and look forward to continuing to work with the Senator.

Mr. CARPER. Again, I thank Senator SHAHEEN and Senator HOEVEN for allowing us to have this colloquy.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as if in morning business.

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

REMEMBERING CHARLIE MORGAN

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Madam President, today I rise with a heavy heart because our Nation has lost one of its outstanding citizens and many of us have lost a dear friend.

Charlie Morgan, chief warrant officer of the New Hampshire National Guard, passed away early Sunday morning with her wife Karen and their daughter Casey by her side. Chief Charlie Morgan was just 48 years old. For those of us who had the pleasure of knowing Charlie, it has been a difficult week. However, as I rise today, I take comfort in the opportunity I had to share part of Charlie's life and work.

Many know Charlie for the national attention she received over the last several years advocating on behalf of her fellow gay servicemembers and their families. However, first and foremost, Charlie was a soldier. She enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1982. After a brief period away, Charlie returned to service as a member of the Kentucky National Guard in 1992, 1 year before the now-repealed don't ask, don't tell policy became law.

Following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, Charlie returned for a third time, joining the 197th Fires Brigade of the New Hampshire National Guard, a tour that included a yearlong deployment in Kuwait.

In addition to the mental and emotional challenges of military service, Chief Warrant Officer Morgan shouldered the constant burden of keeping her life secret from her fellow soldiers. Married to her partner Karen in 2000, Charlie was unable to live openly under the military's don't ask, don't tell policy.

Immediately following the repeal of don't ask, don't tell, Charlie made national news as one of the first servicemembers to publicly confirm her homosexuality and shed light on many of the remaining inequalities faced by same-sex military families.

I first met Charlie in 2011. She contacted my office during her deployment in Kuwait when she learned that despite the repeal of don't ask, don't tell, her partner Karen of over 10 years would not be allowed to attend mandatory National Guard Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Programs upon her return.

I was pleased to work with Secretary Panetta and the New Hampshire National Guard, which has been very supportive of Charlie, to ensure that she and her wife Karen would be able to participate in the program together.

However, as those of us who appreciated her determination understood, Charlie was not satisfied. She continued to vigorously pursue equal benefits for same-sex spouses, particularly survivors' benefits and compensation still denied under the Defense of Marriage Act. And this was not an abstract issue for Charlie. In 2011 she was diagnosed for a second time with breast cancer. Concerned for the future well-being of her family, Charlie took aim at DOMA by challenging its constitutionality in Federal court, and her case is set to be heard by the Supreme Court later this year.

Several days ago my office sent out an online condolence card to the Morgan family, and the response from that card has been overwhelming. In less than a week we received over 2,000 messages of support from citizens all across our country, and I would like to read just a couple of those this morning.

From Hobkinton, NH, we heard: Charlie is a hero to many of us. Thank you for making your lives public so others can live their lives privately in love.

From Oregon, we heard: Thinking of you in this time of loss. It is also a loss for our country, but she leaves a legacy that will carry on.

From Fulton, IL, we heard: Thank you so much, Charlie, for all you have done. You will not be forgotten, and your service, work, and legacy will live on. Those of us left behind will honor you by continuing on in this all-important fight for equality.

I hope Charlie Morgan knew how many lives she touched and how greatly we admired her efforts. I know that she will be sorely missed and that her example will continue to guide us well into the future.

With Charlie's memory in mind, I will soon be introducing the Charlie Morgan Act. This bill will end a number of restrictions on benefits for legal spouses of all military servicemembers and veterans regardless of their sexual orientation. Every individual who provides for our defense deserves the peace of mind that comes with knowing one's family will be taken care of should the worst happen. No one should ever again go through what Charlie and her family had to go through. I hope all of us in the Senate will take up this legislation and act quickly to address this issue. It is long overdue.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

KEYSTONE XL PIPELINE PROJECT

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, I rise today for the purpose of engaging in a colloquy with my distinguished colleagues on the matter of the Keystone XL Pipeline for 30 minutes.

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

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, I rise today with my distinguished colleagues, both Republican and Democratic, on a bipartisan basis to urge approval of the Keystone XL Pipeline.

Joining me today will be Senator MARY LANDRIEU from the great State of Louisiana, a Democrat; Republican Senator JOHN CORNYN from Texas; Republican Senator JOHN BOOZMAN from Arkansas; Democratic Senator JOE MANCHIN from West Virginia; Republican Senator JOHN BARRASSO from Wyoming; Democratic Senator MARK BEGICH from Alaska; and Republican Senator LISA MURKOWSKI, also from Alaska. I emphasize that to show the bipartisan support for this critically important project.

I also will have a statement from Senator MAX BAUCUS of Montana, who has been leading this effort with me, in his case on the Democratic side of the aisle. He wasn't able to be here, but I do have a statement from Senator BAUCUS that I will read as well, and I appreciate very much his statement of support.

You may have seen that the national gas price has now risen to an average of \$3.62 per gallon. So the average price for gasoline today in the United States—and it continues to go up—is up to \$3.62 a gallon. That is the highest it has ever been in the month of February. So that is a new record—not a record we want to make, either, but it is a record, the highest price for a gallon of gasoline in the United States that we have ever had in February.

If you take a look at that trend line, you will see it has been going up dramatically, and that price is double—\$3.62 a gallon average across the country—that is double the price of gasoline compared to when this administration first took office. So it is a doubling of the price, and, of course, every consumer, every working American is paying that price at the pump. It affects our small businesses across the country, and it affects our families across the country every day.

There was a poll released yesterday that you may also have seen. The poll was commissioned by API, which is American Petroleum Institute, and was conducted February 5 through February 10 by Harris Interactive. They polled just over 1,000 registered voters, and so the poll has a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percent. In that poll, 69 percent of the respondents support construction of the Keystone XL Pipeline—69 percent—and 17 percent oppose it. So Americans overwhelmingly support the project—69 percent to 17 percent—in the most recent poll. And, of course, why wouldn't they.

This is a project which provides energy to our country when we very much need it. It is a project which will provide jobs—tens of thousands of jobs. We have 7.9 percent unemployment. We have 12 million people out of work. Here is a project that won't cost the

Federal Government one single penny, but it creates tens of thousands of high-quality private sector jobs.

It is about economic growth. This is a \$7.9 billion project. The project over its life will create hundreds of millions of dollars of tax revenue for State and local governments, as well as the Federal Government to help with our deficit and our debt without raising taxes—more tax revenue without raising taxes.

It is also about our energy security, energy security for America. Instead of bringing oil from the Middle East, this is about working with our closest friend and ally Canada to meet our energy needs. This pipeline will not only bring in Canadian oil, however. It also moves oil from my State of North Dakota and from the State of Montana to our refineries in places such as Texas and Louisiana and other places around the country. So this is about making sure we don't have to import oil from the Middle East, and I think that is something every American wants. That truly is an issue of national security.

It has been 4½ years since TransCanada—the company that is seeking to build the Keystone XL Pipeline—it has been 4½ years since they first applied for a permit. Here is a chart that shows the route the pipeline would take, and it shows that they had already built another pipeline. This is actually a second pipeline they are seeking to build. But after 4½ years, they still don't have approval of a project that is similar to other projects that have been built.

As a matter of fact, we have built quite a few pipelines through the country, and they go everywhere. For some reason this project has been held up for 4½ years when almost 70 percent of Americans support it. We need the energy, and we need the jobs. Why would that be?

There was a report in the news yesterday that actress Daryl Hannah and about 40 activists handcuffed themselves to the fence of the White House, and they were arrested for that. They were doing that in protest of the Keystone Pipeline project. Maybe that is where we should be today. Instead of our bipartisan group of Senators here in the Senate arguing the merits of this project and advocating for what the American people want, maybe we should be handcuffed to the White House fence because that seems to work.

It has been 4½ years, and we still don't have a decision. We still don't have approval from the administration on this project even though gas prices have doubled on this President's watch, even though the American people overwhelmingly support the project, even though we need the energy and the jobs. We don't want to keep importing oil from the Middle East, and that is why we are here. We are here on a bipartisan basis to make our case and to get this project approved.

I want to begin by recognizing a distinguished colleague and somebody

who has been a real leader in the energy world and has a direct interest on behalf of his constituents in the great State of Texas concerning this project. We need to move oil to the refineries in Texas; we need to move oil—not only Canadian oil but oil from North Dakota, Montana—and we need to get it to refiners so we can get it to our consumers, so instead of seeing the price continue to go up, we can bring it down. I think that is what the American people want.

Perhaps the Senator from Texas can talk about the refining and jobs aspect of this multimillion-dollar project.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican Whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I want to express my appreciation to the Senator from North Dakota for his leadership on this issue. He has been relentless in pursuit of this Presidential permit to authorize the Keystone XL Pipeline because he recognizes, as I do, that it is important in terms of jobs, energy security, and national security.

It has been said that because of the revolution in natural gas production in America, and as a result of horizontal drilling and fracking—combined with the energy we can get from the Keystone XL Pipeline from Canada—that North America could potentially be energy independent—North American energy independence—in the not-too-distant future.

The Senator from Louisiana is scheduled to be here as well. This is a bipartisan effort, as all successful efforts around here must be.

Before Senator LANDRIEU speaks, I want to talk about the Keystone XL Pipeline, which would create an estimated 20,000 American jobs in construction and manufacturing in my State, which still is the No. 1 energy-producing State in the Nation. As a result, job growth in Texas is outpacing most of the rest of the country. I would add that North Dakota is now the second largest energy producer in the country thanks to the Bakken shale efforts. In Texas alone the Keystone would lead up to \$1.6 billion worth of direct investments and would boost our State's economic output by an estimated \$2 billion. This would not only create thousands of long-lasting and well-paying jobs, it would allow Texas refineries to refine up to 700,000 barrels of oil each day to produce gasoline, jet fuel, heating oil, and the like.

As the distinguished Senator from North Dakota pointed out, this would increase the supply at a time when gas prices have gone up, because of restricted refinery capacity, in the worldwide price of oil. It can do nothing but help America contain those high prices.

It strikes me that this is a no-brainer. While we find ourselves engaged in armed conflicts in places such as the Middle East—where Iran periodically threatens to block the Strait of Hormuz, through which about 20 percent of the world's oil supply flows—

why wouldn't we want to make ourselves less dependent on Middle Eastern oil? Why wouldn't we want to make ourselves more independent on North American energy? This is a no-brainer on almost every count I can think of.

Let me express my gratitude to the distinguished Senator from North Dakota for his relentless leadership. I know he is not going to give up. He just keeps getting stronger.

In excess of 50 Senators have signed a bipartisan letter to the President on this, and it is very important for our country as it relates to jobs, energy independence, and national security.

I see the distinguished Senator from Louisiana here, and I know others wish to speak on this important issue as well.

I yield the floor.

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, I want to thank the distinguished Senator from Texas. Look at the economic growth and dynamism in his State of Texas; look at the economic growth and dynamism in the State of North Dakota. We are now the fastest growing State in the country. Senator CORNYN is correct when he said Texas is the largest producer of oil in the country. I think they produce about 1.1 million barrels of oil a day. We are at 750,000 barrels and growing, so we are after you. The important point is we are producing this product and we have to have the infrastructure to get it to market.

Again, I thank the distinguished Senator from Texas, and I wish to now turn to the distinguished Senator from Louisiana. Here is another State that is doing amazing things in oil and gas. They have refineries, and they have refineries that need product. To get that product from North Dakota, Montana, and our ally Canada to Louisiana, we need pipelines. We don't want to ship it in from the Middle East. We want to send them our oil.

I am very pleased Senator LANDRIEU is here, and I would ask for her comments.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Madam President, I am very proud to join in this colloquy with over eight Members of the Senate this afternoon. We are here to talk about this important issue and share ideas with our colleagues and with those who are listening to this debate. This pipeline is important so we can get a reliable, steady stream of oil and gas as we move to cleaner fuels in the future for our country.

I say to my good friend, the Senator from North Dakota, how important it is for drilling, particularly for natural gas, using the breathtakingly new technology that is allowing us to find both wet and dry gas, which is very valuable to our country. This is happening in many places in the country. It will help to fuel a renaissance in manufacturing.

This is not just going to help traditional oil- and gas-producing States

such as Louisiana and Texas, this breakthrough in technology enables us to retrieve gas not only in an economically efficient way but in an environmentally sensitive way. It is going to be very important and impactful to many States in the Union.

We are already seeing companies coming back to the United States. They are relocating from Chile, places in Europe, places in Asia, and coming back to the United States primarily because of this resurgence of gas.

But here we are talking about a pipeline that is primarily for oil that comes out of sand. This is not the traditional deep wells where there are large deposits of oil that are drilled. This is a technology that is allowing the separation of these sands to get the carbon or oil out of them.

Now, yes, we want to move as quickly as we can away from carbon—or to lessen carbon because of its damaging impacts—but there is a transition period we have to go through. There is no waving of a magic wand; there is no snapping of a finger; there is no jumping from this generation of energy production to the next overnight.

Even President Clinton—even Al Gore when he was Vice President—talked about the transition we have to go through. I see this pipeline as a transition. It is giving us oil from one of our closest, most dependable, and friendliest of all allies, Canada, as opposed to pushing over the next 5 or 10 years to continuing to do business with countries that do not share our values, such as the leadership in Venezuela today or the problems with countries in the Middle East. Even the Saudis, whom we respect in some ways, do not have the same value system as the United States. We would much rather—at least my constituents would much rather—deal with Canada and Mexico. Not only are they better allies, but for Louisiana, we like working in Canada. It is a little closer to home. We like working in Mexico.

Many of the workers on these rigs and in this business come from Louisiana and Texas. Let me be crystal clear: My colleagues who are helping on this issue are absolutely right, the people of Louisiana wish to work in Canada where there are environmental protections, where the wages are good, where there are not a lot of pirates floating around, and where workers are much less likely to be kidnapped. I mean, these are serious issues for the oil and gas industry. That is one of the reasons I have been urging President Obama, along with many of my colleagues, to rethink his position on this pipeline.

I guess this has been said by my colleagues—I see the Senator from West Virginia is here, and I am sure he has said this on the floor before—Canada is going to produce this oil one way or another. The question is: Who are they going to send it to? Are they going to send it to their good friend the United States and our refineries in Texas and

Louisiana or are they going to ship it somewhere else in the world? I would like—and the Senator from North Dakota knows this—to form a stronger partnership with Canada and Mexico so we can have security in North America. This will help the Canadian economy and it will help the Mexican economy, which immediately and directly affects our whole Nation. These are our border countries. We are doing a lot of work. I don't know if the Senator knows this, but down in Mexico, in the Gulf of Mexico—I literally—and this is a little bit afield—was recently in Israel and had the great opportunity to go offshore to visit a field, the Leviathan field, which is one of the largest fields in the world. It was discovered in a remarkably new place, which gives Israel a great opportunity to think about being energy independent or energy self-sufficient, which is quite exciting.

When I went offshore in Israel, I met my own workers from Morgan City, Thibodeaux, and Lafourche. They said: Why are you here? I said: The same reason you are. The Louisiana workers go everywhere. We are proud to do it. We would love to be close to home in Canada, Mexico, and our refineries, which are expanding for the first time in many years. Our manufacturing base is expanding.

Finally, I would say in this colloquy, I ask the Senator from North Dakota: Has he had a conversation with the oil minister from Canada—I think it is Minister Oliver—and talked to him at all recently? I had a conversation with him yesterday, and I wanted to maybe share that with the Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. To the distinguished Senator from Louisiana, I recently visited with the ambassador, Ambassador Gary Doer. We talked about this and other issues.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Through the Chair, I wanted to say I had a very good conversation with the Canadian Minister of Natural Resources. We had a long conversation, about 10 or 15 minutes, and he explained to me the importance of this development for Canada. He also said to me what I just shared with my colleagues. He said: Senator, Canada is going to develop this resource. It is just a question of whom we send it to or with whom we share these benefits.

So for those who are opposed to the pipeline because they don't like the direction it is going or they think there is something America can do to prevent this resource from being developed, that is simply not true.

I see the Senator from West Virginia. I wanted to get that in the RECORD. I thank the Senator for his leadership and for allowing me to join this colloquy because the people of Louisiana strongly support the development of this pipeline. We are proud of the oil and gas industry, but we also recognize we need to make a transition to cleaner fuels and we want to do our part and are happy about the natural gas that is being discovered in this Nation.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, I wish to thank the Senator from Louisiana for her leadership in energy, on-shore and off, in a big way. She is absolutely right.

This is our opportunity to have North American energy security and North American energy independence, working with our closest friend and ally Canada. This is how we do it—Mexico as well. The Senator from Louisiana is also absolutely right: Canada will produce this oil. That is a fact. That is going to happen. The question is, Is it going to come to the United States or is it going to go offshore to China? We see these green lines; they show the pipelines that would take that oil to China rather than the United States. Net effect: We continue then to import oil from the Middle East, and Canadian oil goes to China. It makes no sense—not to mention better environmental stewardship that we would enjoy working with Canada, which we will touch on as well.

I wish to at this point ask the distinguished Senator from Arkansas, Mr. BOOZMAN, to join the colloquy, and I would also invite Senator MANCHIN as well. I see Senator BEGICH is here also. So I invite Senator BOOZMAN to make his comments but then also offer the opportunity for our other distinguished Senators to join in the colloquy.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam President, I thank the Senator from North Dakota for his leadership and for, again, spearheading this effort. I thank all the Senators who are here and are, in a very bipartisan way, trying to move this project forward.

We speak a lot about jobs in regard to this project, but that simply cannot be overemphasized. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, most of the largest labor unions—major labor unions—all agree that if this pipeline were to go forward, which it has to do, it would create 250,000 jobs; 20,000 of those tomorrow, almost immediately. Again, it is so important.

It is important to my home State because many businesses, many hard-working Americans living there would benefit tremendously. We have a large Nucor plant. That Nucor plant in Blytheville, AK, in Mississippi County, would supply a lot of the iron that would be used. We have another facility, Welspun Tubular Company, they make oil pipe. They have 500 miles of this pipe sitting in storage that they have produced to go forward, which should be a great thing. The problem is instead of increasing employment for the future, right now they have had to lay off workers because of the indecision.

So there are all kinds of reasons we need to do this. Others have talked about national security reasons, but the labor—the good-paying jobs that would be created, again, not being dependent on places such as Saudi Arabia and Venezuela, that is a pretty good

deal, and we need to move forward immediately.

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, I wish to recognize the Senator from the great State of West Virginia.

Mr. MANCHIN. Madam President, if I may, I wish to thank all my colleagues. This is something wonderful for the people who are watching and the people watching who are here, to see a bipartisan colloquy; that we all agree, basically, about energy being the crux of what we do and how this country is made up and how we got to where we are today.

My little State of West Virginia now has a tremendous shale gas find in the Marcellus Shale, with the Utica Shale in Ohio, the shale being explored and produced all over our country. We truly have an opportunity in our lifetime to become totally energy independent.

The only thing I am saying is, where I come from, the people are such good people and they have a lot of common sense. They say: We would rather buy from our friends than our enemies. How much would this displace, as far as us buying from and depending on areas of the world that haven't been friendly to the money we give them for the product of oil they sell us; does the Senator from North Dakota have an idea about that?

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, I wish to respond to the Senator from West Virginia. Right now, between the oil we produce in the United States, both together with Canada and Mexico, we generate about 70 percent of the oil we consume. This project alone would add 6 percent. We are talking about over 800,000 barrels a day this project adds and brings to market. So we go from about 70 percent just for this project phase 1 to about 76 percent. But understand this pipeline project is expandable to 1.4 million barrels a day, so we can see it would take us up even higher.

So we are talking about a significant contribution to our oil supply, again, from North Dakota, Montana, and Canada, versus, as the Senator says, countries such as Venezuela or from the Middle East.

Mr. MANCHIN. My other question would be this. Since we have Senators from two of our great producing areas, knowing the challenges we had in Louisiana and the gulf coast with the BP oilspill, as well as a lot of concern about the environment and that is why it has been held up, I understand our friend, Gov. Dave Heineman from Nebraska, now has approved this. That, as I understand it, was the last concern he had.

I have always said this, and I will ask the question of the Senator from Alaska—they have one of the harshest climates and are one of the largest oil producers for our country and they have been able to do it in a safe atmosphere—will the Senator from Alaska comment on his concerns, if he has them, about doing this in a safe environment.

Mr. BEGICH. Absolutely. I thank my friend from West Virginia. We built the largest single capital project back in the 1970s when we brought oil off the North Slope, almost 800 miles through the harshest, most unpredictable climates one would ever see. I can tell my colleagues, if we went back to the stories and articles, the sky would fall, the environment would be destroyed, and the world would come to an end by us building that pipeline. We are multiple decades past. It has worked very well. There haven't been those disasters people claimed would happen.

On top of that, my friend from Louisiana mentioned the environmental impact and it makes sense that the pipeline is the safest way to move oil.

On top of that, we have a choice—the Senator from North Dakota made it very clear—and that is to get it refined in China or the United States. I don't know about anybody here, but I would bet we all agree that between the environmental standards, we have a better environmental record than China in the refining of oil products, so it makes sense for us to do it.

On top of that, people are traveling to Alaska not just for the jobs and the opportunity but the beauty of Alaska, and we have more visitors who want to see the pipeline, to visit the pipeline. When I went down the Gulkana on a rafting trip, it is unbelievable beauty. But one of the last things people do when they come down and land the raft and begin to pack to go back home, there is the pipeline going right across the Gulkana. Guess what. It hasn't damaged the environment. As a matter of fact, there are plenty of photos of people trying to get their raft underneath the pipeline; trying to get the pipeline and the rapids at the same time. So the Senator's point is a very good one.

The Governor of Nebraska has approved it going through their State, but there is nothing similar to Alaska when it comes to the harsh environment we had to build in. We did it, and we did it when technology was much different. Today, the standards are even greater. Again, I wish to echo the Senator's point.

If I could make one other point. This is unique, the Chamber and labor working together for the common good of this country and the jobs and the groups—we think of the Teamsters and Operating Engineers, the pipeline contractors, the plumbers and pipefitters, they are all part of this agreement to build this pipeline and train workers; as my colleagues know, there is a huge gap in our trades. So we get to utilize a training opportunity, employ thousands of people not only for today but for the future.

So from Alaska's perspective, we like it. We know pipelines. We know we have to build big ones, as we did, and the fact is, as the Senator from North Dakota said, they are going to move this oil one way or another. We have a choice. Do we do it in our country, get

the jobs that are attached to it, the opportunity to refine it in States with great quality refineries or do we let China do it? This is a no-brainer for my State.

Mr. MANCHIN. One very quick question, if I may, to the Senator from North Dakota.

There might be a fallacy of thinking that only oil that is going to move is what we would buy from Canada. How much oil would be moved from the United States that we produce in the United States but that is captive right now, that is not being refined, maybe down in Louisiana and Texas? Would this help U.S. production?

Mr. HOEVEN. I appreciate the question from the Senator from West Virginia. For starters, it would put 100,000 barrels a day—this is for starters—into the pipeline. So day one is 100,000 barrels.

Mr. MANCHIN. Just for North Dakota?

Mr. HOEVEN. North Dakota and Montana. It is very important to understand that is just when we start. The pipeline is expandable. Today, North Dakota is the second largest producer of oil in the Nation, second only to Texas. We produce 750,000 barrels a day—and it is growing—and more of our oil is leaving the State by truck and rail than by pipeline. We need these pipelines. This project alone will take 500 trucks a day off our roads, trucks which are beating up our roads and creating safety issues in our State. This is vital infrastructure we need to get this product to refineries in Louisiana, in Texas, in Illinois, and other points around the country.

At this point, I wish to thank the Senator from Louisiana, again, for her participation in this colloquy. I wish to turn to the esteemed Senator from Wyoming, Mr. BARRASSO, another major energy-producing State, and ask him for his thoughts in regard to the regulatory obstacles to energy development. If we are going to be energy secure, energy independent in this Nation, we have to find a way to empower project investment and empower the kind of development we are talking about—not only infrastructure but the new technologies that will help us produce more energy in our country with better environmental stewardship. That is what we seek to do and I know that is exactly what Senator BARRASSO is working on in his State. I would like him to address that aspect.

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, if I may join in this discussion—and it is wonderful to see the bipartisan nature of this discussion, to turn and look around the floor of this Chamber and see three Democratic Senators talking to this issue and three Republican Senators talking to the same issue and agreeing, because all of us are like-minded in the fact that when we think of energy—and the Keystone XL Pipeline is a big part of that—we think of energy security for our Nation, which is part of this, economic growth, and

environmental stewardship. We just heard from one Alaskan Senator and the other Alaskan Senator will speak shortly.

We hear what a wonderful job people continue to do in one of the most pristine areas of the country, the State of Alaska. I will tell my colleagues, as a Senator from Wyoming, an energy capital of this Nation, that energy is a big part of our economy but so is tourism. If we did things that did not focus on environmental stewardship for our own State, it would impact our tourism. Energy is a big part of the economy, so we want to have economic growth, energy security, as well as environmental stewardship.

But I will tell my colleagues it has been a difficult task based on some of the regulatory obstacles to energy development. The President likes to talk about how he supports all-of-the-above American energy development. But, in fact, we heard him the other night during the State of the Union Address. His actions over the past 4 years tell a completely different story. Instead of making it easier for our own country to produce energy, I believe he has made it harder.

If we look at the folks who are leaving his administration: The EPA's Director, Lisa Jackson, she said the EPA's role is, interestingly, "to level the playing field against fossil fuels." Secretary Chu, who is leaving the administration, said he would "boost the price of gasoline to the levels in Europe." Secretary Salazar, who is leaving, continues to talk about the fact that the energy strategy, he says, showed good results, but they have restricted access to Federal offshore and onshore oil and gas resources through moratoriums, through blocking permits, through leasing plans. They have denied Americans billions in public revenue and thousands of jobs.

I stand here saying that the Keystone XL Pipeline is a perfect example of the Obama administration's pattern of delaying good projects by requiring excessive redtape.

So I come here with the Senator from North Dakota and the Senator from Alaska—and I thank the Senator from North Dakota for his leadership, for his determination, for his courage, and for his fortitude—in fighting to make sure we as a country continue to strive for American energy security. That is exactly what we are going to have with this proposal.

I call on the administration today—the President, as well as the new Secretary of State—to approve the Keystone XL Pipeline, to allow that energy—which is either coming here to the United States or going to China or elsewhere—to approve it to come to the United States, to help our production, to help our consumers, to help our jobs in this country. Those are the things that are important as we try to focus on energy security for our Nation, economic growth for our Nation, as well as environmental stewardship.

So I thank the Senator from North Dakota for his leadership.

I see now the ranking member of the Energy Committee is here with us as well, who has done a masterful job with a visioned "Energy 20/20." For people who have not seen it, I would say they are missing something—if they have not really read through it—from the Senator from Alaska because she has focused like a laser on these three E's of energy security, economic growth, and environmental stewardship.

So I thank both the Senator from North Dakota and the Senator from Alaska, the ranking member of the Energy Committee, for their leadership.

Mr. HOEVEN. I thank the Senator. I appreciate the Senator from Wyoming being here and for his leadership on energy. Again, I want to recognize that he comes from an energy-producing State, a State that is producing energy for this Nation and creating hundreds of thousands of good jobs in doing so. I thank him for his leadership on the Energy Committee as well.

I want to turn to and recognize the Senator from Alaska, who is the ranking member on our Energy Committee. As the Senator from Wyoming said, she has recently put out a blueprint for energy development, energy independence, energy security for our Nation. It is comprehensive. It includes all types of energy and, again, developing—developing—them the right way, with good environmental stewardship and the latest technologies but truly accomplishing something the people of this country very much want; that is, energy security.

So at this point I would turn to the Senator from Alaska and ask for some of her comments on this Keystone Pipeline project in terms of the economic benefits and the need for our Nation to truly have energy security.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. I thank my colleague from North Dakota. I thank him for his leadership on how we can get the Keystone Pipeline moving, how we can ensure that a resource from our friend and ally Canada can be utilized, can help us here in this country to truly gain that level of energy security we have been talking about.

There have been several good comments about the report I released last week, my "Energy 20/20." I just happen to have a copy of it here on the floor. But out of 115 pages, I can distill it in one simple bumper sticker; that is, energy is good, energy is necessary.

If you look at the cover of the report here, it is essentially a map of the world from way up high. When you are looking down and you see the lights at night, you can tell the prosperous places within the world. It is where the lights are on. It is where our energy is. So when we talk about energy, I think it is important to really put it in the context of how important, how significant it is to our daily lives.

Over a week ago now we were all reminded of the importance of energy when there were 34 minutes of dead

time during the Super Bowl. A lot of folks were paying attention to, well, where do we get our energy sources from? It starts a good conversation, a necessary conversation.

In my document I focus on five different areas where we need to talk about energy policy. I am looking for an energy policy that is abundant, affordable, clean, diverse, and secure. When we talk about the fifth one, the security, this is where the Keystone XL project really comes in to play. When we are talking about security, that does not necessarily mean that everything we want as a nation is going to be produced right here within our own borders. What it means is how we reduce vulnerabilities from others, how we can eliminate our reliance on OPEC.

Ladies and gentlemen, this is a reality. This is doable. This is possible by 2020. This is not pie in the sky. Let me give you some numbers.

In 2011 Canada produced roughly 2.9 million barrels of crude oil per day. Mexico produced 2.6 million. When you add this to the approximately 6 million barrels the United States produces each day, total North American production—which is 11.5 million barrels—it is far greater than the Nation's net imports, which was 8.5 million barrels back last year—more than double the imports from OPEC.

So if we can do more within our own borders here and ensure that we are able to rely on our friends to the north, the Canadians, and our friends to the south, the Mexicans, we can displace—we can fully displace our reliance on OPEC imports by the year 2020.

But part of achieving this goal is being able to count on the Keystone XL Pipeline. It is as simple as that. It is about security. It is about ensuring that we have a supply that not only helps us achieve that energy security, but it allows us to achieve economic security.

So far as the jobs that are created, really the ripple effect that goes out—it is not just constructing one pipeline. It is the ripple effect that comes from this boom of opportunity within our country.

So it is jobs and economic security. It is energy security from the perspective of reducing our reliance on those countries we do not necessarily like, removing ourselves from the need to import OPEC oil, and having the ability to control our destiny from a perspective of abundance rather than from scarcity.

We should look to our friends and neighbors. We should work with the Canadians. The President should sign the Keystone XL Pipeline bill into law. He should make it happen. We should not be waiting any longer for all the reasons so many on this floor have discussed this afternoon.

So to my friend the Senator from North Dakota, I say thank you for your leadership. Let's make this happen now.

Mr. HOEVEN. I thank the Senator from Alaska again for being here today talking about the importance of moving forward with the Keystone XL Pipeline project and, again, for her leadership on energy issues. She is our ranking member on Energy. I think no matter whom you talk to, she is absolutely inclusive when she talks about energy development, all aspects—the energy development, the environmental stewardship, the jobs, developing all types of energy. She brings tremendous knowledge and experience to energy issues. So I would urge the administration to listen to one of the leading voices in energy in our country, and that is Senator MURKOWSKI, and ask them to approve this project.

The senior Senator from Montana could not be here today but did ask that I express his strong support for the Keystone XL project—Senator MAX BAUCUS from Montana. My friend from Montana has said over and over the same thing all of us know; that is, Keystone is about jobs, and every day we delay the Keystone Pipeline is another day we delay creating American jobs.

So I want to thank not only Senator BAUCUS but all of the Senators who have joined us here today: Senator LANDRIEU from Louisiana, Senator CORNYN from Texas, Senator BOOZMAN from Arkansas, Senator MANCHIN from West Virginia, Senator BARRASSO from Wyoming, Senator BEGICH from Alaska, and, as you have just heard, Senator MURKOWSKI from Alaska.

We have made the environmental case. The environmental case is stronger with the pipeline project than without it. Every single State on the route is supporting the project. And I think, as Senator MURKOWSKI so well concluded for us, it is about energy; it is about jobs; it is about tax revenue we need to close the deficit and address the debt without raising taxes; and it is about energy independence and energy security for this country so we do not continue to import oil from the Middle East or from places such as Venezuela but, rather, we get it from our closest friend and ally Canada, as well as from States such as my own State and from Montana, and we refine it in our refineries and provide it to our hard-working citizens across the country. So instead of having record highs in the price of gasoline—we have the highest price ever at this point in February: \$3.62 a gallon—we start moving energy costs down for our consumers, to create a more robust economy, and to ease the pain at the pump for our hard-working Americans.

I just want to close with that there will be another rally of demonstrators around the White House this weekend. I think it is scheduled for Sunday. Now, I do not know if they are going to handcuff themselves to the fence like actress Daryl Hannah did the other day or what they are going to do. But the simple point is this: I just gave the information from a poll that was conducted from February 5 through Feb-

ruary 10. One thousand voters were contacted in that poll that was commissioned by API and conducted by Harris Interactive. One thousand voters were contacted, and 69 percent support construction of the Keystone XL Pipeline and 17 percent oppose.

So here is a project which on the facts is something that needs to happen. We need approval of this project on the facts, as we have gone through and cited in great detail. But this is a project which the American people support 69 percent to 17 percent. My question for the administration is, Is this decision going to be made on the facts and what the American people want or is this going to be made on the basis of special interest groups that may demonstrate from time to time around the White House? I believe the decision needs to be made for the American people to approve the Keystone XL Pipeline project.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HEINRICH). The Senator from Wyoming.

UNIONS AND OBAMACARE

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I rise today as a physician who practiced medicine in Wyoming for more than 25 years, and I rise to continue the debate we have been having in this body about the President's health care law.

Although there has been significant debate and discussion, what I have continued to try to do is discuss some of the many ways in which this law falls short of its goals and falls way short of what the American public has asked for when it comes to the need for health care reform.

The Obama administration continues to put significant effort into trying to sell its health care law and tries to convince people that it is the answer to all of their problems. But in the words of John Adams, "Facts are stubborn things."

Despite all the spin of this administration, the American people continue to learn the facts—the facts about just how bad this law is and how much it is going to cost them personally in terms of finances and personally in terms of their own health care. That is why the President's health care law continues, this day, to be unworkable, unpopular, and absolutely unaffordable.

We saw another example of this recently when one group who had previously supported the law learned more about what is in it.

Back when we were debating the bill originally, labor unions around the country were among the biggest backers of the law. Unions sent their lobbyists up here to press their Democratic supporters to pass the law. They put out many statements saying things like, "We need this health care law now." They held rallies right out in front of the Capitol.

We saw the same kinds of demonstrations last spring when the Supreme Court was considering a challenge to the law. Now, I went to the oral arguments, and I remember one group of