

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

union members chanting: "We love ObamaCare."

Well, apparently now, today, I will tell you, the love is gone. According to a recent front-page article in the Wall Street Journal, some union leaders now say that "many of the law's requirements will drive up the costs for their health-care plans and make unionized workers less competitive."

Republicans said the President's plan would drive up costs for hard-working Americans from the beginning. Union leaders absolutely ignored our warnings and supported the law anyway. Now we have been proven right, and we are seeing buyer remorse by a lot of the law's supporters. This was absolutely predictable. What is really interesting is the reaction. It is clear from that Journal article that many union leaders are angry and disappointed.

Well, union leaders should be angry. The Obama administration misled them into believing their members could keep the health care plan they had. They should be angry with President Obama. They were deliberately deceived when he promised repeatedly, saying health insurance costs would go down \$2,500 for the average family by today.

The unions are also now lobbying the Obama administration to do an end-run around the law. The Wall Street Journal quoted union leaders saying that they were going to push the Obama administration to now subsidize their health insurance costs. Now disturbing comments come from the administration suggesting it might be willing to do just that.

Unions have focused their efforts on trying to get the administration to expand access to advanced premium tax credits. The subsidies were intended only for people who cannot get insurance through their employers. That is how it was set up. Well, that means union members who have insurance for a plan jointly run by the union and their employers are not eligible for the subsidies.

The law is crystal clear. In fact, the law lays out four conditions for getting the tax credit: You have to get insurance through the exchange, either a State exchange or the Federal exchange; you have to pay the premiums yourself; you must not be eligible for minimum essential coverage other than the plans offered in the individual market; and you must not be enrolled in an eligible employer-sponsored plan. Those are all four. That is it. So union workers covered by their employer or by a joint plan from their employer and the union do not meet these four criteria.

Let's go back to NANCY PELOSI and that famous quote: "First you have to pass it before you get to find out what's in it." The union bosses should have read the bill before they decided to support it. And if they had read the bill, they would have been smart to oppose it.

Despite the clear law, a spokesman for the Treasury Department told the

Wall Street Journal that "these matters are the subject of pending regulations." Amazingly, one of the lobbyists for the union said the administration can "create a loophole for them through Federal rule-making." Create a loophole for the unions. Create a loophole.

Well, that is wrong. The American people know it is wrong. The administration has no legal authority to expand access to health insurance subsidies under the law. This is not a matter of regulation, it is a matter of the law. It was a bad law—bad law as it was being adopted, bad law as it was being signed. It is full of unintended consequences. This particular consequence was spelled out unambiguously. Last week, 31 Republican Senators wrote to remind the President of that fact.

Of course, it is not just union members who are disturbed by the law's effects on health care costs. Numerous reports have pointed out that costs will continue to rise when more of the health care law's mandates kick in next January. One study estimates that healthier people are going to see their insurance costs go up by 40 percent to cover the cost of insuring less healthy people. The law's requirements on caps on medical benefits will also cause an increase in premiums. So will the requirements that adults up to age 26 be allowed to stay on their parent's plan.

Late last year, Blue Shield of California asked for permission to raise its rates by as much as 20 percent. The CEO of Aetna said rates in some areas could go up as much as 100 percent. That is on top of the premium increase of more than \$3,000 the average family has seen since President Obama took office.

We have got to lower the cost of health care. President Obama and the Democrats who voted for this piece of legislation in the House and in the Senate promised the law would do that. Well, it has not done it. It will not do it. Their plan was short on reform and long on budget tricks and accounting gimmicks and on empty promises.

The cost concerns the unions raise are absolutely legitimate. I share those concerns and so do all of the Senators on this side of the aisle. But we cannot give extra benefits to union members. The problem is not that the law makes union health benefits more expensive; the problem is the President's health care law makes everyone's health insurance more expensive. The answer is to control costs for everyone, not just for special-interest groups with friends in the White House.

We need to revisit the taxes, the fees, and the other policies that drive premium increases. We need real health care reform in this country, reform that gives people the care they need from the doctor they choose at a lower cost.

When we were debating the President's health care law, some of us warned about the danger of writing a

bill behind closed doors. Actually, the President warned about the danger of writing a bill behind closed doors until he decided that was exactly what he wanted to do. So he sent his Chief of Staff to do just what he said would be dangerous, write a law behind closed doors.

Some of us were concerned about the special deals for special groups. Of course, these were special deals that would harm health care for the rest of us. President Obama and Democrats in Congress rejected our concerns. NANCY PELOSI famously said we need to pass the law so we can see what is in it. Well, the American people now are seeing more and more of what is in the law, and they do not like what they see. Now they are calling for all of us to do something about it. This is not the time for special-interest loopholes. It is not the time to make more deals behind closed doors. It is not the time to hand out breaks for one favored group at the expense of everyone else.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

TRIBUTE TO RANDY AND SUZY STORMS

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, another sad occasion in Kansas. A week ago this past Sunday, the Wichita community was struck by the tragic news that Randy and Suzy Storms were killed in a fatal car accident in east Wichita. Randy and Suzy were traveling home from visiting a friend at a local hospital when Randy experienced a health problem while driving, which led to a devastating accident.

Randy and Suzy were very well known and very well loved in the Wichita community for more than 30 years. Their care and compassion for those in difficult circumstances shaped how they lived their lives. Randy had a special gift for connecting with those who were struggling, perhaps because he knew how difficult life could be. As a teenager, Randy suffered a spinal injury which forced him to live as a quadriplegic. Resolved to make his faith in Jesus the core of his identity and not his physical disability, Randy chose to invest his life in caring for others.

Shortly after high school, Randy began to serve on the staff of Young Life, a Christian organization that mentors and works with young people. His position at Young Life was a springboard to reaching a wider Wichita community. Over the years, Randy became a counselor and friend to countless pastors, community leaders, young adults, and everyone else who was in need of a friend.

Jen Shively, who served with Randy for 27 years, remembered that he