

We need to follow through with action. We must listen to the American people and amplify their voices as they call for action to preserve our health, our economy, and our way of life.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BROWN). The Senator from Louisiana.

KEYSTONE XL PIPELINE

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I was on the floor earlier today. I have been on the floor since we convened back into session—our first session since the election—and I am very heartened by what I have heard from colleagues such as the Senator from Hawaii, who just spoke, our colleague from Montana, who just spoke, our colleague from Tennessee, who spoke; as well as the leadership particularly, including Leader REID, majority leader-to-be MITCH MCCONNELL, and the Senator from Texas, Mr. CORNYN, all of whom came to the floor and said they heard the message of the American people. The message is that now is the time to stop the bickering, stop the fighting, stop the gridlock, and take action on issues the American people know are the right answers for our country, focusing on building jobs and economic hope for the middle class, in large measure because of this extraordinary opportunity for an energy renaissance that is underway as we speak—energy jobs, petrochemical jobs, manufacturing jobs.

Our unemployment rate in south Louisiana is 3.5 percent. Our general unemployment rate is much lower than the national average and has been for many years. But even in my State, with these very positive numbers, middle-class families are seeing their incomes stagnate, their way of life not progressing, and their economic progress not moving forward as it should.

So while people are happy and doing well in some parts of the country—every leader came to the floor and said, we heard the American people. We want jobs. We want economic opportunity. We want the middle class put first. We want gridlock put last, and we want you all to roll up your sleeves and get the job done. That was the message.

So I came to the floor at 2 o'clock, the first minute we opened, to claim the floor to say let's begin with trusting each other, moving forward, and passing the Keystone Pipeline which is a bill that has enjoyed bipartisan support and has the 60 votes on this floor for passage.

There is strong objection from the 40 Members who have been opposed. Of course they have a right to be opposed. We debated this for 5 years, but the process is let's vote and let the process move forward. I am very encouraged that in the 2 hours 15 minutes I have been on the floor that the House of Representatives has actually heard this call and has decided to introduce—

the Rules Committee will be meeting tonight. I understand they want to introduce the identical bill to the Hoeven-Landrieu bill which will give a clear path. It is a stand-alone Keystone only with private property rights language that is very important to the Republican base but it is also very important to Democratic Members, for me, personally, and my State, but for many rural States on the Democratic side. We cannot allow international companies to expropriate our properties here without due process. It cannot happen. I am the strongest advocate of building pipelines everywhere, but there are private property rights that have to be followed.

The language carefully drafted by Senator HOEVEN and myself respects the private property rights of American citizens. I understand the House is going to take that language and the straight-up, no attachments, no riders, no anything—except for the Keystone language as it is written in this file that is pending and pass that out of the House.

We have already made some progress in getting the Keystone project built or moving forward. I want to put into the record a couple of headlines of magazines and articles that I think help to underline or underscore what I am trying to say.

The "Science" magazine editor-in-chief says, "Time to move forward on Keystone Pipeline."

LABI: "Twenty Louisiana Chambers of Commerce support Keystone Pipeline." This is the Louisiana Association of Business Industry. It is a recent headline.

The Washington Post: "On the Keystone XL pipeline, put policy ahead of politics." That is what we are doing today.

Illinois Review—this is one of the most important. "AFL-CIO says Keystone XL is not just a pipeline but a life line."

The largest labor unions in our country have rolled up their sleeves. They are in this fight. They are telling us, Democrats and Republicans, but mostly to the Democratic Caucus, because they are part of our base, vote for the pipeline. This is jobs for average middle-class working people that we need. We deserve them, they say, in States such as yours, Mr. President, Ohio, Illinois, Pennsylvania, and in States such as Colorado, New Mexico, New York. I could go on and on. In West Virginia.

Remember, my State—not that we don't need good jobs but our unemployment rate is very low. We have jobs and opportunities pouring into Louisiana and Texas, the energy coast of America. We are proud of it.

We are proud not only to produce these jobs and this energy but we are helping to fuel a renaissance of manufacturing in the Midwest. We are exceedingly proud of this. We are not just creating jobs for ourselves, we are creating jobs for the Midwest, for the manufacturing renaissance of America.

We are allowing for the expansion of the economy on the east coast and providing help for the west coast. It is what we do. It is what America's energy coast does. No coast does it better than we do.

We are connecting to a partner, Canada, which is better for us in many ways than Venezuela or even some of our friends in the Mideast, and we don't—not every friend is our friend in the Mideast. We are getting oil from our best friend, our best trading partner, our best ally, that has equal economic standards as we do and even some higher environmental standards than we do to create economic opportunity for our country.

I wanted to submit this for the record. There are no other Senators to speak. I am going to yield the floor in a minute.

We are still in a time of morning business until votes at 5:30.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be able to show a device in the course of my presentation about exploding airbags.

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

AIRBAGS

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, there has been quite a bit in the press about defective exploding airbags. This is a part of a steering wheel with the airbag deployed. In the steering wheel, the driver would be like this with their hands on the steering wheel. When the impact occurs and the airbag is deployed, instantly, if you have seen that kind of impact on the airbag, because of the chemicals inside of the steering wheel, it causes an explosion that comes out of already existing holes in the metal that contains the airbag and it deploys the airbag like this so that the—in this case, the driver—in the case of the passenger, the same, but it is not a steering wheel like this. That protects and has saved countless, thousands and thousands of lives. The fact is that we now know there are four people in this country who are dead. There are a hundred who are injured. That is not including the international office, because of the defective airbag that has been manufactured by a Japanese manufacturer. What its defect is is that instead of the chemicals exploding to inflate the airbag, it explodes with such force for all of this that is contained within the steering wheel before it explodes. There is metal.

When the chemical explosion occurs, it is supposed to go through the airholes and fill the bag. Instead, what

has happened in the explosion, it is with such force that some of the metal becomes shrapnel and comes through the bag and in effect becomes lethal projectiles that harm either the driver or the passenger.

For example, on this exploded airbag, I want you to see the size of the hole that was ripped in this bag here. Here is another one. A hole that was ripped. There are holes in other parts of the bag. Obviously this isn't supposed to occur.

As a matter of fact, I visited with a constituent from central Florida. This is a firefighter with a young wife and a young child. A piece of shrapnel, in this particular constituent's case, came into his eye.

Therefore, in his occupation as a firefighter, he will not be able to fulfill the financial support for his family as a firefighter. Four people in this country are confirmed dead, and 100 are injured.

We have a Federal agency that is supposed to be protecting us. It is called the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Recently, because of the attention brought to this matter, they have come out and said they want these recalls, but the recalls first started out at about 4.7 million. It has been doubled to 7.8 million. It is increasing all the time, and it is expected that it will be in the range of 11 million in this country and 16 million recalls worldwide.

Normally, if you could get the recalls done, once it occurs—once the defect is known—then the public is protected.

But it seems like, similarly to some dragging of the feet of automobile manufacturers and their parts manufacturers in the past, that is what is occurring here. What we are also seeing is a Federal agency that in this Senator's opinion has not been right up front, forward leaning, and aggressive to protect the public.

Thus, I have requested of the Secretary of the Department of Transportation to get in this and to do several things: First, to make sure that all these recalls are happening, and, secondly, if you are a person who knows of the recall because the automobile manufacturer has sent you a letter, are you going to be wanting to drive around if they tell you they can't fix it immediately? Are you going to be wanting to drive around in an automobile that could suddenly explode and cover you with metal shrapnel, severely injuring or killing you? Of course not.

So where is the automobile manufacturer with regard to giving a loaner until that air bag can be replaced with a safe one or where are they with regard to providing a rental car?

For the automobile company to say we will disable the airbag until we can get the proper replacement, that is not a solution because often the seatbelt and the airbag are designed to work in conjunction with each other to protect the safety of the driver and the passenger. So driving around in a disabled airbag is not a solution. The solution is

prompt replacement of the defective, lethal airbags or, until they can be replaced, to give the customer another automobile that is safe.

Along the way, someone came up with the brilliant idea in the Federal agency that they were going to issue just regional recalls under the assumption that highway humidity, in fact, is one of the causes. They don't know that, but that is one of the suspicious causes. But what does a regional recall do for the protection of the public? Aren't we a mobile society? If you say we have high humidity in my State of Florida, in Texas and in other Southern States, aren't we a mobile society in which people in other parts of the country who own automobiles come to our States? Of course we are.

Oh, by the way, how about some States in the north that have high humidity in the summer—if, in fact, that is the cause. So to say that a solution to the problem is a regional recall is totally ridiculous and the Federal regulatory agency should not be issuing these kinds of edicts if we are serious about protecting the public.

I have recommended, in a letter that has been signed by several of our colleagues to the Secretary of Transportation, Secretary Foxx, that he start imposing the maximum fine allowed by law per day against the automobile manufacturers for any days that are missed in replacing the defective airbags so that people will not have to drive around in cars with this defect.

While we were home over this recess during the election, I had an airbag explode and demonstrate its force. It is severe, and it is quick, as it has to be in order to protect the passenger in an automobile accident.

But if that airbag is defectively constructed so that the explosive force becomes like a hand grenade exploding and sending pieces of a metal into the human body which the very device is supposed to protect, then it is time for action. I hope the folks who are manufacturing and installing these defective airbags indeed are hearing these words of warning.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

TAXPAYERS RIGHT TO KNOW ACT

Mr. COBURN. I wish to spend a few minutes talking about a bill that passed the House that has 37 bipartisan cosponsors in the Senate that came out of my committee. It is an important transparency item for the American taxpayers called the Taxpayers Right to Know Act.

What most Americans don't realize is there is only one agency that knows

how many programs it has—only one. None of the rest of the Federal agencies know how many Federal programs they are running. They can't put them down, can't list them on a piece of paper.

The GAO has recommended for a long period of time—starting about 3 or 4 years ago—that we should be putting this down when we have the truth in transparency and the truth in accountability act and the transparency act with President Obama. We started this process where the GAO would look for duplication and report it to Congress.

We have a bill that has passed unanimously in the House. It is a bipartisan bill that came with a voice vote out of our committee. All it says is that every agency ought to have to list their programs every year so we can know what they are doing. GAO says that will help immensely in terms of eliminating this \$200 billion to \$300 billion a year in duplication.

We are going to have some unanimous requests later today, and we will have a bill that is on the floor for which the majority leader has once again filled the tree, which allows no amendments whatsoever on the bill.

This bill should be on the floor, should be standing on its own, and should be passed because nobody can honestly object to the agencies not knowing what programs they run, not having a complete list.

I mean, it is counterintuitive that anybody would vote against it. It makes no sense that we don't know that, and we know we need to have it. It is an easy vote for everybody, and the majority leader isn't going to allow an amendment.

So we are not at a new day yet with this present majority leader. This is something that helps every American—Democrat or Republican. It helps us run our government more efficiently, more effectively. It is a good-government amendment, and yet it is not going to be allowed.

I am disheartened that at the end of the year we could actually do some things together that would actually allow us to accomplish real things for the American people that will make a real difference in the long run, but we won't because we don't want to have what was guaranteed to the minority when the Senate was set up—the right to offer amendments.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. ISAKSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to be recognized for up to 5 minutes.

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