

We have been trying to get the FDA to make good on their commitment to make sure that pregnant women and nursing mothers know and understand the guidelines out there in terms of what is safe to consume when it comes to fish because, again, when we are looking for that good, nutritious food source, it is pretty tough to beat Mother Nature. Yet, that is exactly what this approval from the FDA is trying to do, which is, effectively, not only trying to beat Mother Nature but messing with Mother Nature.

Again, as one who believes that the real thing is the best thing for our families, the best thing to serve at the dinner table, I find it very troubling. In fact, I am spitting mad today. I have calmed down a lot since I received this news this morning, but I can tell my colleagues that people back home are going to be mad about this for a long time.

For about 5 years now, the FDA has been considering this application for this genetically engineered salmon. Again, they are giving it a pretty nice name, calling it the AquAdvantage, that somehow or another this gives an advantage to the salmon. Well, it does. What it does is allow this genetically engineered fish—I don't even know that I want to call it a fish—this genetically engineered organism to grow twice as fast as any other salmon in the water.

So how does it get to grow twice as fast? Well, it doesn't happen naturally. It is not the way Mother Nature orders it. What they do is they start messing with it. This process, which has now been approved by the FDA, is a process that splices genetic material from a Chinook salmon, a king salmon, and it takes that genetic material and it integrates it with a pout fish and an Atlantic salmon. People might know about an Atlantic salmon, a farmed salmon. What is an ocean pout? Let me show my colleagues what an ocean pout is. An ocean pout is basically this eel-type of bottom fish. Those of my colleagues who know their salmon know about the Chinooks, the sockeyes, and the chums, and they know that this isn't anything close to a salmon, whether it is a wild Alaskan salmon or whether it is a farmed salmon. This is an eel. We are taking a splice from this, and we are taking a splice from an Atlantic salmon, and we are basically splicing this with a Chinook salmon. The resulting organism, this company claims, is going to grow to the size of an Alaskan king salmon in a shorter period of time than that found in nature. Freaky.

We call this combination “Frankenfish” because it is just not right. It is just not right. It disturbs me, quite honestly, that the FDA would sign off on the approval of a genetically engineered animal designed for human consumption. This is the first time ever.

The FDA is saying this is going to be safe: We are going to make sure it is

safe. We are going to make sure that it doesn't interbreed with the wild stocks, and thus perhaps destroy them. We are going to make sure that it doesn't mix with them so that it doesn't transmit disease. We are going to make sure that it is separated so that it doesn't eat up all of the wild sources available for our Alaskan salmon.

They are going to make sure, apparently by doing this, because they are saying that with this approval, these AquAdvantage salmon can only be raised in land-based, contained hatchery tanks in two specific facilities in Canada and in Panama. We should all feel safer, I guess, because it is all going to be in Canada and Panama. There are no other locations under this application in the United States or elsewhere that are authorized to do this. Somehow or other, the FDA says they are going to maintain regulatory oversight over the production and the facilities, and they are going to conduct inspections to confirm that adequate physical containment measures remain in place. They will be working with the Canadian and Panamanian governments to be conducting inspections. Really? Do I feel safer about making sure that our wild and healthy stocks are going to be not infiltrated by the Frankenfish, by these genetically engineered organisms designed for human consumption, designed to grow twice as fast to get to the size of a king salmon, so that a company can derive the benefit of selling more of this fish.

Well, I am saying FDA should never have approved this—never have approved this. The fact is that the Alaska delegation, as well as members of other delegations in this body and on the other side, have pounded their fists for quite some time against this measure through the FDA. They know full well how much we object to it. At 7:55 last night my assistant got an email from the FDA saying that commissioner would like to talk to me about some imminent news. By the time the morning came around, the imminent news was already made public. Alaskans were already aware that this approval from FDA had come forth. It was not only me; it is my understanding that the head of the agriculture appropriations subcommittee—I met with him yesterday—didn't get a heads-up about it. The nominee was before us yesterday in the HELP Committee, and I actually put two questions to him about seafood. There was no heads-up that this was coming our way, just kind of, boom, lay it on the table.

I have to tell my colleagues, we have made no bones about the fact that this is wrong not only for Alaska and our wild stocks, it is wrong for our salmon stocks around the country, and it is something I am going to continue to fight.

I am not sure as we deal with this news today if we can get the FDA to reverse this. I am going to keep working

on it. But at a bare minimum, people around this country need to know what they are serving their families when it comes to seafood. If this is going to be allowed into the markets, if it is going to be allowed on restaurant menus, then it needs to be labeled as such.

The FDA has said there will be draft guidance on voluntary labeling indicating whether food has or has not been derived from GE Atlantic salmon. So, basically, if you want to put a label on that says this is a fake fish, a fake salmon, you can go ahead, but you don't have to. It is only voluntary.

That is not good enough for this mom. That is not good enough for most who care about what their families are eating. So we are going to continue to press for mandatory labeling if the FDA is going to approve—wrongheadedly, in my mind—this genetically engineered fake fish for human consumption. They darn well better agree that labeling will be required because I am not going to eat it.

#### ENERGY INNOVATION

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, let me switch to a better topic, and that is one I know the Presiding Officer cares a great deal about; that is, the issue of energy and the importance of energy to our Nation's economy and to our overall health.

I have come to this floor many times to highlight what I believe are the shortsighted, anti-energy decisions that we have seen come from this administration. Whether we are talking about the Keystone XL Pipeline, more than 7 years of delay and the eventual rejection of that infrastructure, whether it is the burdensome rules coming out of the EPA that raise the energy costs or whether it is the actions from the Department of Interior that seek to halt resource development in Federal areas, this administration has rarely ever worked with us to promote responsible energy, mineral, and timber development.

In Alaska this ever-shifting Federal regulatory environment played a very key role in the recent decision by Shell to abandon 7 years of work and \$7 billion of investment in the offshore Arctic. It was just this week we received word that another company, looking again at low oil prices but seeing this same deteriorating regulatory environment, decided to follow suit, and they are seeking to return their leases in the offshore.

The Obama administration has also canceled offshore lease sales in the State. It has hamstrung projects in our National Petroleum Reserve, which we absolutely need if we are ever going to refill our Trans-Alaska Pipeline. It has placed half of the National Petroleum Reserve off-limits, even though it was specifically designated for development. Of course we all know the situation in ANWR. This administration is trying to lock away 10 billion barrels of oil in the nonwilderness portion of

ANWR, which could be safely produced with development of just 0.01 percent of its surface area. The list goes on and on.

I told you I was going to move to more promising and more uplifting subjects than Frankenfish and what the administration has done to suppress our ability to access our energy resources. I do want to move to another area because I think this is an area and a focus that I would like to believe we can find support, not only working with the administration but working with colleagues and building some partnerships on both the public and the private side. This is in the area of energy innovation, where I believe there is greater hope for working together with this administration to make a real difference for our Nation. Innovation holds tremendous promise, not just for us as policymakers but also in terms of long-lasting benefits that it can deliver for not only the United States but around the world.

Innovation doesn't require more complex and costly regulations. It doesn't need to choose winners or losers in the energy sector. Instead, innovation offers a chance at common ground that will deliver results and help power our Nation for decades to come. No matter your motivation for seeking cleaner and more affordable energy, we should all be able to agree that without innovation—without pushing every day for that greater technology—our energy future and our economic prosperity are hardly secure.

The good news for us in this country is that the United States is the global leader in innovation. We hear this is a race and that America is falling behind, but I would contend that our strength and skill are unmatched. Our innovation, ideas, inventions and our products and processes have changed history and in turn changed the world.

The United States has led the way in research and development that has changed our lives and lives across the world for the better. Among Federal agencies, the Department of Energy, in particular, has played an important role in these efforts, and I think they can make even greater contributions, especially when it comes to vital basic research.

The DOE is hardly perfect. Many of us would make changes to the scope of its mission and improve its priorities if we were given the chance, but given that, the Department has also sparked innovation that has helped transform the global energy landscape. The most successful innovations give us more energy, reduce the amount of energy we use, as well as lower the cost we pay for energy. I think as we move forward we should keep those goals in focus and we will improve. Increasing access to energy, making it more affordable, and improving its environmental performance are the key factors that drive our innovation policy.

Those of us on the Energy and Natural Resources Committee are always

talking about innovation and how best to promote it through reasonable Federal policies. We understand how critical it is to our Nation's future. That is why energy and the innovation part of energy is a key part of our broad bipartisan Energy bill that we reported through the energy committee by a vote of 18 to 4 back in July.

The bill also includes legislation that is authored by Senator ALEXANDER to renew some of the energy-related portions of the America COMPETES Act. We have agreed to authorize a 4-percent increase in funding for basic energy research each year, which I think puts us on a responsible path to double our Nation's commitment to it.

It is basic research that is at the heart of the mission of our system of national labs and also many of our research universities. The men and women in the research sector are pushing to make that fundamental discovery—to conduct the basic research that could find the next big thing for energy. This type of research should be a priority for us, and the Department of Energy should be committed to helping new discoveries transition to market viability.

Within this bipartisan bill we also re-authorize the ARPA-E Program, which solicits ideas that are too early for private sector investment but with bridge funding has the opportunity to transform the energy sector. ARPA-E is a true hands-on program that ensures awardees meet milestones toward the goal of market viability. ARPA-E hasn't been around that long, but it has been promoting some good ideas, strong ideas, and producing some good results.

Our bill also supports innovation in a number of other areas; specifically, energy efficiency, energy storage, and distribution; in vehicles it provides for hybrid microgrid systems; and for recycling, for geothermal power, for marine hydrokinetic, and for many other developing technologies.

Recently, we have also seen more reports of private individuals and companies who plan to invest in energy technologies with the potential to transform the way energy is produced, delivered, and consumed. This, too, will help drive energy innovation in this country.

Back in July, Bill Gates announced his personal commitment to invest \$1 billion over 5 years to advance new energy technologies. He made that commitment based on his recognition that currently available energy options will not allow the world to achieve its much discussed climate goals in a way that also works to reduce the costs for people using energy. It is one thing to be working toward climate goals, but in doing so if all that we do is increase the cost to the consumer, that doesn't help us. His focus is as much on clean air and clean water as it is on lifting people around the world out of poverty.

I had the opportunity to meet with Mr. Gates several weeks ago and look

forward to seeing what comes out of his commitment. I am also following the possibilities that are coming out of venture capital and other private investments. I think these efforts augment the Federal research and development dollars, in many cases ensuring that promising technologies are not just set up on a shelf somewhere but are pursued to a successful and productive result.

Now you have heard me say it on the floor many times, but we in the State of Alaska are desperate to see energy innovation. Energy prices in many parts of Alaska are much higher than the prices paid by our friends in the lower 48. In some communities in Alaska it costs 40 to 50 cents a kilowatt hour for electricity. In certain parts of the State, over half of a family's budget goes just toward energy to keep warm and keep the lights on. Can you imagine what that means when over half of your family's budget—half of your income—is used just to keep your lights on and keep yourself warm? It doesn't leave a lot for anything else, such as educating your kids, feeding them or for health care. It is a huge issue for us. There are so many things that contribute to the high cost of energy. It is the big geography and the lack of a comprehensive and interconnected energy delivery system. We have tremendous energy potential in the State of Alaska, and unfortunately many of our communities are just not powered by it. We have natural gas in abundance, and yet our second largest community in Alaska doesn't have access to natural gas. We are trying to get it there, but that is our current reality.

Many communities in rural Alaska still rely on diesel to generate their power. Delivering the diesel, whether it is moving it up river by barge or flying it in by plane is hugely expensive. It is not sustainable. Innovation is essential to moving these rural communities—and even the not so rural communities—off diesel and onto more sustainable, locally generated, and less expensive energy systems.

What we are doing in Alaska is bringing some very innovative technologies to communities around the State through a variety of State-run programs that are largely financed by the revenues that are derived from our oil production. Think about that. We are a State that derives most of our revenues and income from oil. We are taking a nonrenewable energy source, taking the revenues from that and helping to facilitate our renewable resources—our resources that will be there for well into the future. These programs need to be financed. We are doing so much of it from our oil production. Responsible development of Alaska's resources has enabled our State to take the necessary steps to improve energy delivery in our remote communities. In many ways this is almost like a virtuous cycle, where current energy production helps fund the next generation of energy production and where we harness

today's energy to significantly improve the lives of our people.

What we are seeing in the State are several communities working with various State agencies to integrate wind, solar, and geothermal into their electricity delivery system in an effort to displace the power that is normally generated from expensive diesel. It is the microgrids that we are seeing that are coming to be found as the solution. We are home to more microgrids in the State of Alaska than any other State out there. That is largely because they are the only option for us. They are the only option for many of our communities that lie far outside any regional transmission grid. We have transmission grids in what we call the Railbelt area. But it is difficult when you have large geography and small population numbers. So you are going to have to figure out how you can literally power one village at a time or maybe you get lucky and you are able to cluster a few.

But knowing what, for instance, the island of Kodiak has done with being able to power a major seafood-producing port through wind, combined with their hydro resources and also utilizing batteries—that area in Kodiak is almost 100 percent powered by renewable resources. This, again, is one of the major seafood-producing ports not only in the State but in the country. So the energy that is needed for those processes is coming to us by renewable energy sources—almost 100 percent. The irony—and we were able to talk about this briefly in the energy committee this morning—is that in order to meet increased demand in Kodiak, they are going to need to expand one of their hydro facilities, Terror Lake, and so they have asked for assistance with that. If they cannot get the expansion, which some are objecting to because they don't want to see an expansion of that dam, what will happen? You go back to diesel. You go back to diesel. That is not the answer here.

So what we have been doing with pioneering of our microgrids is something that I think provides States and the Federal Government with ample opportunities to conduct research and develop solutions to better integrate renewable technologies into these microgrids. In order for renewable technologies to be effective in the State, innovative research and development is required, and I think the result of those efforts has made a dramatic difference in many communities.

Bringing renewables online in remote communities like Kodiak has displaced hundreds of thousands of gallons of diesel fuel, not only saving the people who live there hundreds of thousands of dollars but resulting in a cleaner environment overall.

I do think it is exciting to think about what a difference future innovations in renewable technologies and energy storage could mean for communities not only in a place like Alaska

but really around our country and around the world. Whether it is through Federal research and development, whether it is through our State programs that are assisting our private capital, promoting innovation is a clear path to lower energy costs and a future with cleaner water and cleaner air.

We might not agree on every energy policy that comes to this Chamber, but I hope we can all agree that energy innovation is one key to ensuring our economic growth, our national security, as well as our international competitiveness. I look forward to working with colleagues in all of these areas.

With that, I see that my friend and colleague from Kansas—a gentleman who is always filled with thanksgiving and who has shared that with many of us today—is here on the floor, and so I will yield at this time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Kansas.

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I thank the distinguished Senator from Alaska for her kind comments, her advice, and her help on several important issues we have worked on together. I hope she enjoyed the Thanksgiving meal we had—I guess it is called the Thursday lunch bunch.

#### TERRORIST ATTACKS AGAINST FRANCE AND GUANTANAMO BAY DETAINEES

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I rise today to congratulate the French Government for taking aggressive and appropriate action to arrest and kill the terrorists responsible for last Friday's vicious attack in Paris that resulted in 129 killed and over 300 wounded. We all pray for the full recovery of those wounded and note that everywhere within our country we see the American flag at half staff, along with many displaying the flag of our ally France.

The good news today is that the mastermind of several terrorist plots and the plot that killed so many last Friday is dead. Abdelhamid Abaaoud is dead in the same fashion as his victims. So be it. *Viva la France!* *Continuer le combat!* Keep up the fight.

As our Nation memorializes those who perished in France, it is the absolute wrong time for President Obama and this administration to be putting forth a plan to relocate Guantanamo detainees to the U.S. mainland—the absolute wrong time.

Now we learn that the administration has delayed the much-publicized but secret plan to close Guantanamo and bring terrorists to the United States. White House spokesman Josh Earnest said, "I don't have any additional guidance for you but the plan will come relatively soon." He has been saying that for some time. Others think the plan could even be released while the President is gone for the G20 meeting in Turkey. As a personal aside, I might suggest he try to move the terrorists there. The reason Presi-

dent Obama delayed the plan is that we had a terrorist attack in France. France has gone to war. The United States is on high alert. Apparently he has tossed this decision and public announcement regarding the plan to the Department of Defense, which has stated there is nothing imminent. Thank goodness for that.

Now, beyond the security threat this poses to our communities in Kansas and in South Carolina or Colorado—the sites which this administration has surveyed for potential relocation—there has been no intelligence assessment regarding the danger of moving enemy combatants from Guantanamo to the United States. That is amazing. The question is, How can the administration ask Kansans or Coloradans or South Carolinians or any Americans to paint a bull's-eye on their community without providing assurances that moving detainees to the United States will not pose a threat to them or our national security? It seems unfathomable, yet this President is proposing to do just that.

This President's unending affinity for Executive orders risks overriding his Attorney General's view of the law, the advice of those at the Department of Defense, especially those close to Fort Leavenworth, and military law enforcement. It goes against the will of the Congress, which voted in this body 91 to 3 to maintain a prohibition on moving detainees to the mainland.

There is absolutely no intelligence to support the move—none. In short, the Senate, Congress, Department of Defense, the Attorney General, and the American people have spoken.

Yesterday I wrote Department of Defense Secretary Carter to ask whether an intelligence report has been done to support the administration's claims that Guantanamo Bay is a recruiting tool for ISIS and other terrorist organizations. Some people believe that. Common sense tells you, however, that moving detainees to the mainland would be a greater recruiting tool for ISIS and other terrorist organizations. I asked if an assessment showed detainment in the United States would decrease recruiting or did an intelligence product show that national security threats would decrease if any enemy combatants are held in the United States. From my discussions with Members of this body on the Senate Intelligence Committee, the answer is that they have no comprehensive intelligence assessment.

Simply put, an assessment regarding the transfers of detainees to the mainland has not been done. So I have asked Secretary Carter and the Department of Defense to ensure that an assessment is completed. To do otherwise would be irresponsible and reckless. How can the President of the United States allow ISIS to paint a target on those who live near what would become Gitmo North? No community in the United States wants that label.

Fort Leavenworth, in particular, is not a suitable replacement for Gitmo.