

trucks, carrying the Nation's commerce, our children, schoolbuses, and parents trying to get home for dinner. Thousands of communities across the country are simply keeping their fingers crossed, hoping their current bridges last another year.

Let me provide one more example in terms of what is happening with regard to the overregulation of our economy. This involves one of the most important sectors of the U.S. economy—small community banks. Over 1,300 small community banks have disappeared since 2010, and only 2 new banks in the United States have been chartered in the last 5 years. If you ask any small community banker what is driving this, they will point to this chart. Regulations from Washington, DC, are driving our small community banks out of existence. Even during the Great Depression, we had on average 19 new banks a year. In the last 5 years, the United States has seen two new banks chartered in our country.

So what do we do? Well, the good news is that many colleagues in the Senate on both sides of the aisle have offered suggestions and introduced bills to stop the redtape, to stop this trajectory of Federal regulations from strangling our economy and our future. But we need something that is simple, something that hard-working Americans understand, and something that is bold to take on this challenge. I believe the amendment I have offered to the Energy bill, the RED Tape Act, is both simple and bold enough to take on this challenge. It is only 5 pages long. Using a simple one-in, one-out method, it caps Federal regulations. New regulations that cause a financial or administrative burden on the economy, on hard-working American, on middle-class families, on union workers would need to be offset by repealing an existing regulation. Simple—you issue a new regulation, you repeal an old regulation. People understand that and it makes sense.

This is not a radical idea. This is not some kind of poison pill that we want to attach to the Energy bill, because I think that is a good bill. It is an idea that is gaining consensus not only throughout the country but throughout the world. Other countries have actually taken up this idea to fix their regulatory problems as well. In Canada, they recently put an administrative fix to their regulations that was one-in, one-out. In Great Britain they have done this to the point where it is viewed as so successful that they are not talking about one-in, one-out anymore, they are talking about maybe one-in, two-out. So I think this is an idea that both parties of the Senate, Members from both sides of the aisle, can get behind.

Even National Public Radio did a recent story about how well this one-in, one-out rule is working in Canada. It has freed up hundreds of thousands of hours of paperwork for small businesses in particular. Even the Canadian

Socialists have backed this idea. I certainly hope Senator SANDERS is listening, and I hope I can get him and other Members of this body to support this amendment.

To be clear, I am certainly not against all regulations or permitting requirements. When I served as the commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources in Alaska, we worked with our bipartisan legislature to overhaul our permitting and regulatory system and to bring what we have seen on the Federal Government side—a huge backlog of permits—to get projects moving. We brought that backlog down by over 50 percent through regulatory and permitting reform, and we did so with the absolute understanding that protecting our environment and keeping our citizens safe was a fundamental precondition to any of our actions. But we can do both. We can bring down this huge burden and still make sure we have a clean environment and a strong, healthy economy.

There are simply too many Federal regulations out there, and the American people know it. It is time this body stops increasing this number of regulations and puts a cap on it.

Finally, if we do this, we will make sure that all of the comparative advantages we have in this country—so many that we have over so many other countries—will enable us to unleash the might of the U.S. economy, create better jobs, and create a brighter future for our children and their children.

I yield the floor.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULLIVAN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### SENATE DEBATE

Mr. SASSE. Mr. President, one of the fundamental purposes of this body is to debate some of the biggest issues facing this Nation and to do so in an honorable way. The Senate is for debate but not as an abstraction. It is to be addressing and ultimately solving the meatiest challenges the Constitution demands that we tackle. Unfortunately, a great deal of our debate is weak and embarrassing. Much of it falls off the trivial side of the cliff or the shrill side of the cliff.

During my time serving Nebraskans in this place, I hope to be aligned with those who want fighting and debating in this place, but it needs to be meaningful fighting. It needs to be honorable, honest debating.

To that end, there is a terrific column this week by Pete Wehner in Com-

mentary magazine. Partly because the column is about Daniel Patrick Moynihan, at whose desk I intentionally sit, partly because it is about C.S. Lewis, a man whose writings have changed my life, and partly because it is just darn good exhortation to us, I would like to read a portion of this column into the Senate RECORD today.

Wehner begins:

While reading Gregory Weiner's fascinating book "American Burke," I came across this comment: "(Daniel Patrick) Moynihan's intellectual curiosity was such that he gravitated toward thinkers with whom he disagreed precisely because he disagreed with them and could consequently learn from them."

This observation reminded me of an incident in 1948 involving C.S. Lewis and Elizabeth Anscombe, a Catholic convert who was considered one of the most brilliant moral philosophers of her generation.

Lewis was president of the Oxford Socratic Club, an open forum that met every Monday evening and whose purpose was to discuss the intellectual difficulties connected with religion, and with Christianity in particular.

"In any fairly large and talkative community such as a university—

And, I would add, such as a Senate—there is always the danger that those who think alike should gather together into 'coteries' where they will henceforth encounter opposition only in the emasculated form of rumor that the outsiders say thus and thus," . . .

The absent are easily refuted, complacent dogmatism thrives, and differences of opinion are embittered by group hostility. Each group hears not the best, but the worst, that the other groups can say. . . .

On February 2, 1948, Anscombe and Lewis debated a portion of Lewis's book "Miracles," with Anscombe reading a paper pointing out "a fatal flaw in Lewis's argument," . . . (It was a complicated critique having to do with the conflation of irrational and nonrational factors in belief-formation.) The result of the debate, which Lewis himself felt he lost, was revisions to his book. Anscombe, while not convinced by the changes made by Lewis, did say "the fact that Lewis rewrote that chapter, and rewrote it so that it now has these qualities, shows his honesty and seriousness."

That's not all. When Lewis was asked to nominate speakers for the 1951 Socratic Club season, Anscombe was his first choice. "That lady is quite right to refute what she thinks bad theistic arguments, but does this not almost oblige her as a Christian to find good ones in their place: having obliterated me as an Apologist ought she not to succeed me?"

There is something impressive in the qualities demonstrated by Moynihan and Lewis: a willingness to learn from others, including those with whom we disagree. There is in this an admirable blend of intellectual humility and self-confidence—the humility to know that at best we possess only a partial understanding of the truth, which can always be enlarged; and the self-confidence that allows for refinement and amendment of our views in light of new arguments, new circumstances, new insights.

Beyond that, it's a useful reminder that the quality we ought to strive for isn't certitude but to be a seeker of truth. That is, I think, what separates ideologues from true intellectuals. The former is determined to defend a pre-existing position come what may, interpreting facts to fit a worldview that is already well beyond challenge. The latter seeks genuine enlightenment and is eager to discard false notions they may

hold—and values rather than resents those who help them on that journey.

The purpose of debating, then, isn't so much just to win an argument as it is to deepen our understanding of how things really and truly are. It isn't to out-shout an opponent but, at least now and then, to listen to them, to weight their arguments with care, and even to learn from them. It's worth noting that Lewis warned about simply surrounding ourselves with like-minded people who reinforce our own biases and how debates conducted properly "helped to civilize one another."

What a quaint notion.

In saying all this, I'm not insisting that everyone you disagree with is someone you can learn from, nor that everyone's views contain an equal measure of wisdom. Some people really don't know what they're talking about, some people really do hold pernicious and false views, and some people really do deserve harsh criticisms.

My point is simply that because the pull is so strong the other way—most of us use debates as a way to amplify pre-existing views rather than refine them; try to crush opponents rather than engage and understand them; and focus on the weakest rather than the strongest arguments found in opposing views—the Moynihan-Lewis model is a good one to strive for.

Wehner continues:

I understand that talking about such things can sound hopelessly high-minded and, for some, signal a mushy lack of conviction. When you're in a political death match with the other side, after all, the idea of learning from it seems either ridiculously naive or slightly treasonous. But of course, this reaction highlights just how much things have gone off track.

To be sure, American politics has always been a raucous affair. As Madison put it in *Federalist* #55, "Had every Athenian citizen been a Socrates, every Athenian assembly would still have been a mob." The question is whether one stokes the passions of the mob or appeals to reason.

As someone who doesn't do nearly well enough in this regard, I rather admire the Lewis model. He was a better man, and *Miracles* was a better book, for having recognized he lost his debate with Ms. Anscombe. For Lewis to then promote her despite having been bested by her was doubly impressive, yet in some respects not surprising. After all, Lewis was a man who cared more about striving after truth than in attending to his pride. He cared more about learning from arguments than winning them.

So should we.

Again, this was Pete Wehner, *Commentary* Magazine, with some instructive words for all of us laboring here in this body.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

#### ENERGY POLICY MODERNIZATION BILL

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, we are winding down the day here. We have had a good opportunity for good

discussion and debate about the Energy Policy Modernization Act. We took votes on three amendments, and we just concluded voice votes on six additional ones on top of the two voice votes that we had. So we are moving through some of the amendments, and I think that bodes well for us.

As I mentioned earlier, we will hopefully have an opportunity to line up a series of votes in advance so that when Members come back next week we all know where we will be going and the direction. I wish to take just a few minutes tonight, before we wrap things up, to talk about a section in the bill that I believe is very important—not only important to the Energy Policy Modernization Act but really very important to our Nation as a whole.

The Presiding Officer and I hail from a State that has been an oil producer for decades now. It is oil that sustains us, fills our coffers, and allows for us to have an economy that is thriving and strong. It is struggling right now as we look at low production combined with low cost, but we also are a State that enjoys great resources when it comes to our minerals.

We have long talked in this body over the course of years about the vulnerability that we have as a nation when we have to rely on others for our energy resources. We talk about energy independence, we talk about energy security, and, I think we recognize that when we can produce more on our own without others, it makes us less vulnerable.

Energy security translates to national security. I think we pretty much got that message around here, and we are doing more within this Energy Policy Modernization Act to make sure that we are less reliant on others for our energy sources, whether it is what we are doing to produce more fossil fuels or being able to leverage technologies that will allow us to access our renewable resources in a way that is stronger and more robust, again to ensure we have greater energy security.

When we think about energy security, we should not forget mineral security—the minerals that also help to make us a great nation, and a nation that is less vulnerable when we are able to produce more of our own.

For several Congresses—this is actually the third consecutive Congress—I have introduced legislation on this subject. It is a bill that I have titled the "American Mineral Security Act." What we have done within the energy bill is take much of that legislation and include it as part of a subtitle on critical minerals. Maybe it is because I authored it, but I feel pretty strongly that this is a pretty good version. This is a pretty good title that is contained in the EPMA, and I think that passage of not only the critical minerals piece as part of EPMA is key for our economic security, energy security, and our national security. It is just the right thing for us to be doing.

We take for granted that our minerals and metals that we have available to us are going to continue to be available. Unfortunately, most of us do not really pay attention to the fact that so many of the things that we rely on for so much of what we need in our everyday world come from minerals. We just do not think about it. We assume that stuff just gets here. We do not think about where it comes from. We should not ever take for granted our mineral security. We should not ever take for granted what it is that we need.

People talk about rare earth elements, rare earth minerals. When we think "rare," what is "rare"? What exactly does that mean? Why do we need them? What do we use them in? Rare earth elements make many aspects of our modern life possible.

We talk a lot about how we are going to move to more renewable energy sources. You are going to need rare earth elements for wind turbines. You are going to need it for your solar panels. You are going to need it for your rechargeable batteries. You are going to need it for your hard drives, your smartphones, and the screens on your computer. You are going to need it for your digital cameras, for your defense applications, for audio amplification. That is just what we put on this particular chart.

It is important to recognize that so much of what allows us to do the good things that we do—to communicate, to help defend, to help power our country—comes to us because we have access to certain minerals.

According to the National Research Council, more than 25,000 pounds of new minerals are needed per person per year in the United States to make the items that we use for basic human needs, infrastructure, energy, transportation, communication, and defense. You might say: Whoa, 25,000 pounds per person per year—I cannot possibly need all that stuff.

But, Mr. President, you and I fly back and forth to Alaska. Those airplanes we fly on need these minerals. Every one of these young people, as well as us sitting in here, all have a smartphone or some way we are communicating, and we all need this. All of the staff who are working on their computers need that screen to look at, and we all need this.

When you think about it, it is like OK, maybe that number is right. Bill Gates put it quite memorably last year. He wrote a blog post entitled: "Have You Hugged a Concrete Pillar Today?" It is really a very interesting read, and it reminds us that you take for granted the things that we need, the things that we use on a daily basis, the things that are under our feet as we are walking here to work.

Minerals and metals are really the foundation of our modern society. Our access to them enables a range of products and technologies that greatly add to our quality of life. Yet many of the