

to support the disaster bill that passed. Senator SHELBY, Senator LEAHY, myself, Senator PERDUE, and Senator RUBIO, and many others worked very hard on this to bring it together to get the pieces that were missing in place.

I want to thank, particularly, Senator SHELBY and Senator LEAHY for the time they and their staff have given us in the last couple of weeks to try to recover from the vote 2 weeks ago, when we lost what we thought was a solution to this problem.

Mr. President, I appreciate the time on the floor.

I yield to the distinguished Senator from Delaware.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I want to recognize the wisdom and insight from my friend and colleague from the great State of Georgia. We have unmet disaster needs in this country. I look forward to working with him to achieve the relief of the disaster impacts on the Southeastern United States and other States.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to talk about climate change—to talk about something that is a pressing and real problem that affects everyone in this country, and, in fact, in our world. It is a challenge that we can't afford to ignore any longer because the health of our families, our economy, our environment, and even our national security, quite literally, depend on our ability to address it and address it promptly.

After a year of recordbreaking extreme weather in 2018—when we saw rising average temperatures fuel California's deadliest wildfire season on record, when Florida was faced with the strongest hurricane ever to reach that State's panhandle, and when farmers in Delaware and across the country faced challenges due to severe flooding and drought—it is clear that we can't afford to sit back and do nothing about climate change while the American people pay the price.

The costs of our inaction are real—real in human suffering, real in disaster recovery spending, real in lost economic opportunity, and real in the burden borne by our Armed Forces around the world.

Yes, there is a clear link between climate change and national security. The Pentagon has consistently pointed to climate change as a real national security threat that will make the military's job around the world harder. National security leaders from across administrations, both Republican and Democratic, have warned that climate change acts as a "threat multiplier," increasing global instability and weakening fragile States as climate change leads to more extreme weather events and scarcer food and water resources.

In many ways, these findings echo themes about climate change that we already know—that it is already happening, that it continues to get worse,

that it is going to cost us dearly, and that we can do something about it. It is that last point that I want to focus on. We can do something to stop the disastrous impacts of climate change, so long as we recognize it and work together in a bipartisan way to develop, take up, debate, and pass meaningful legislation that can make a difference.

Democrats have a broad range of bold and new policy proposals and of tested and fully developed policy proposals to address climate change. Many of them are bipartisan.

I wanted to come to the floor today to talk through 4 different bills that I have cosponsored—some that are relatively new and some considered across several Congresses—that are positive, constructive steps forward we can take to address climate change.

The first, and probably my oldest bill in this field, is called the MLP Parity Act—a catchy name, I know. It has five Republican colleagues who have cosponsored it now over three Congresses. This bill expands to renewable forms of energy, to carbon capture and sequestration, and to renewable and so-called clean energy a popular and long-established tax tool for financing energy projects that the oil and gas and pipeline sectors have enjoyed for decades. It would level the playing field. It would stop picking winners and losers in terms of energy tax policy. It would be, literally, an "all of the above" energy financing strategy. If enacted, it would be the first permanent change for the financing of clean energy projects in the U.S. Tax Code—potentially, worth billions of new private investment in renewable forms of energy.

It is also cosponsored by the Republican chair of the Energy Committee, Senator MURKOWSKI, the Republican chair of the Banking Committee, Senator CRAPO, and three other colleagues from across the country. We have five Democrats and five Republicans. It has had a hearing in front of the Energy Committee and a hearing in front of the Finance Committee in previous Congresses. This is the sort of solid, scored bipartisan bill that would be a meaningful step forward in addressing climate change.

Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM and I have introduced the IMPACT for Energy Act to create a private foundation to support cutting-edge energy research and technology commercialization. Why would we do this? What am I talking about?

Well, a guy named Bill Gates, one of the greatest inventors and innovators in American history, wants to deploy private investments and foundation investments alongside the Department of Energy, in partnership with a lot of other individuals, to significantly accelerate the cutting-edge research being done at our National Laboratories through the Department of Energy.

This is a tool that several other Federal Agencies already have. It is a so-called private foundation that allows

them to marry up private sector dollars—foundation dollars—with Federal dollars to leverage greater impact. This private foundation can go out and raise that additional money and add it to the energy R&D already being funded by the Federal Government.

I also want to applaud the hard and bipartisan work of my colleagues, led by Senators MURKOWSKI and CANTWELL on the Energy Committee, on a comprehensive energy bill with a wide range of policy ideas that can move us forward. It has several components that I contributed and that would help to address climate change. I very much hope that in this Congress we can finally take up this bipartisan bill and see it signed into law.

Last, but in some ways most importantly, I want to mention a bill I offered at the end of the last Congress with my friend and former colleague, the Senator from Arizona, Jeff Flake. Despite our very different ideological, cultural and contextual backgrounds—we are from different States, from different faiths, and from different perspectives on the role of government and society; he is a real conservative, and I am a progressive Democratic—we still managed to come together and introduce a bill that addresses the cost of ignoring climate change and the impact it will have on the people in our home States.

We offered the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act. It is a commonsense bill to achieve significant and sustained emissions reductions and to help to mitigate the worse impacts of climate change. Our bill would accomplish this by using a free-market approach to pricing carbon pollution that would spur economic growth and put money back in the pockets of American taxpayers. Similar legislation has been introduced in the House of Representatives by a bipartisan coalition. I look forward to reintroducing this bill in this Congress.

The Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act should be the centerpiece of a robust, bipartisan climate agenda because it aggressively tackles emissions while optimizing economic growth and income for working families. We estimate that our bill would reduce emissions by 90 percent by 2050, while creating as many as 2 million net new jobs in the next decade.

I believe this is an efficient way to use market forces to address the very real problem of climate change while creating jobs and opportunities for American workers. Frankly, an outright ban on nonrenewable sources would be inefficient and disruptive to workers from all sectors, but, in particular, across the building trades and other vital sectors of employment. In contrast, sending a strong market signal in favor of lower carbon or carbon-neutral energy would spur investment and growth in these technologies by the private sector and lead us toward a lower carbon future through competition.

We don't need to choose between clean energy and economic growth or between combating climate change and creating jobs. These two goals are not permanently and mutually exclusive. They can go hand in hand if we craft the right policies. Still, we cannot move abruptly away from an economy that relies heavily on fossil fuels without having a real and coordinated plan for the very people—the millions of Americans—whose jobs will ultimately be impacted by that transition.

Fortunately, a gradual transition to a clean energy future can also be an effective job creator. In 2017, the renewable energy and energy efficiency sectors alone employed 2.8 million Americans. If we place a price on carbon and then let the market work, we will create jobs across a wide range of industries, occupations, and geographies.

As we work to deal with the effects of climate change by moving to a cleaner energy and infrastructure economy—an economy that is more resilient—we will need to rely on workers who are already in place in many of these industries. We will need building trades professionals to construct and maintain our new resilient and clean energy infrastructure. We will need manufacturing workers to build these more energy-efficient products. We will also need scientists and engineers to help research, develop, design, and deploy these new technologies. These workers bring real experience and skills to the table, and we must ensure that these skills translate into new, good jobs and that the workers in these new jobs are able to organize for fair competition, for fair compensation, and for fair work conditions.

We can't tackle climate change alone. The United States is the largest historic emitter of carbon dioxide, but our emissions have been declining in recent years. Meanwhile, China has whirled past us, and China and India and other countries are rapidly catching up in their carbon emissions. We need an approach that incentivizes these countries to reduce their emissions as well. The United States is a world leader in science and technology and innovation. We need to develop and advance new technologies—carbon-neutral technologies like small, modular nuclear reactors and carbon capture and sequestration—that we can export. Then we need to find ways to encourage countries like China and India to modernize and industrialize while also reducing their emissions.

There is good work taking place in this area, and there are good solutions we can act on together. We need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in a serious, thorough, deliberate, and thoughtful way. We need to be prepared to adapt to the ongoing impacts of climate change. We need to make sure American workers and families aren't left behind or are burdened by Federal climate policy.

This administration, unfortunately, strikes me as taking us backward. We

are voting on an EPA Administrator in this Chamber who is failing to take action on climate, even on action that is widely supported by industry. Our President just proposed a National Security Council initiative to counter the consensus around climate change and refute the idea that greenhouse gases are harmful to the environment. I shouldn't even need to say this, but that just isn't how science works.

That is why, here in the Senate, we need to take the opportunity to lead and to have voices from both parties in Congress and in this country who want to take bold steps to address the climate. The hard part is going to be squaring these big, bold ideas with political reality. That is hard, but there are ways we can do it. Instead of being silent, we should bring this conversation to the forefront. Instead of debating whether climate change is real, we should be passing bipartisan bills, like the ones I have mentioned today, that can meaningfully address climate change and improve our economy.

Climate change is a serious threat to our economy, to our security, and to our way of life. We need leadership from all parts of our society and government to tackle it, and we must do our part in the Senate. I look forward to having conversations across the aisle, to working together, to identifying real solutions to the challenges before us, and to creating new opportunities for America's workers.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

WOMEN'S HEALTHCARE

MS. STABENOW. Mr. President, I have often said healthcare is not political. It is personal, and there is no part of healthcare that is more personal than the decision if, when, and under what circumstances to have a child and who decides the medical course of action in a serious medical crisis.

These decisions need to be made by women, their families, and their doctors. They should not be made by politicians who are more focused on their own political advantage rather than medical tragedies facing pregnant women at the end of pregnancy who want desperately to have a child.

Our Republican friends know very well that nobody—and I mean nobody—in this Chamber supports infanticide. No one. In fact, in 2002, Congress voted unanimously—100 Members, including myself—to reaffirm that it is illegal, period. Suggesting otherwise is insulting and, frankly, disgusting, and it is beneath the dignity of the U.S. Senate.

How dare the majority pretend to care about the health of women and

children. If the Republican majority cares about the health of moms and their babies, why are you continuing to try to take their healthcare away? The President and the Republican majority have tried again and again and again to repeal the Affordable Care Act.

Let me remind you that before the Affordable Care Act, insurance companies could, and most of the time did, refuse to cover maternity care as basic healthcare for women, leaving parents with bills of tens of thousands of dollars for an uncomplicated birth.

As a member of the Senate Finance Committee, I was proud to author the provision requiring maternity care in the Affordable Care Act. I remember the debate. I remember a very specific debate with a former colleague from Arizona, and I remember Republican efforts to strip that provision to cover maternity care from the Affordable Care Act. Fortunately, they were not successful. Now the administration is legalizing and offering junk insurance plans that treat being a woman as a preexisting condition again.

One study found that none—none—of the newly approved plans cover maternity care. Maternity care is not a frill. It is basic healthcare for women, and if we are seeing more and more of these healthcare plans being put on the market, where women assume they are going to be covered and once again will not be, that is outrageous.

Why aren't we passing a bill to guarantee that prenatal care and maternity care are covered for moms and babies as essential healthcare in every insurance plan? I assure you, this medical care is essential, and until parts of the Affordable Care Act began to be unwound by the administration, it was viewed as essential care for every woman.

How dare you pretend to care about the health of women and children while voting to dramatically slash Medicaid and healthcare for low-income working families. When you gut Medicaid, you are keeping moms and babies from getting the healthcare they need. In fact, Medicaid provided prenatal care and maternity care for 43 percent of American moms and babies born in 2016—43 percent. Why aren't we voting to strengthen Medicaid? Why aren't we voting to strengthen Medicaid healthcare for moms and babies? Why isn't that being brought to the floor?

A few years ago, the Senate Finance Committee reported out a bill that I led with Senator GRASSLEY called the Quality Care for Moms and Babies Act. This bill would create a set of maternal and infant quality care standards in the Children's Health Insurance Program and Medicaid. The goal is simple: improving maternal and infant health outcomes. Shouldn't we all want to do that?

Let me be clear. We have no uniform quality standards right now across the country for almost half of the births that occur every year. The Quality Care for Moms and Babies Act will help