

from Maine. And this gets the Pentagon to focus on a 5-year strengthening of our national security in the Arctic region.

As you know, that is becoming an area of great power competition, and America has very strong, strategic national security and economic security interests in the Arctic. And this NDAA will cement not just the Arctic as an important national security imperative of our country but Alaska as the focal point for Arctic security endeavors for the United States and our allies.

The other element here in the NDAA which is so important, of course, is taking care of our troops and their families. This bill authorizes a pay raise of almost 3 percent for both military members and Department of Defense civilians. It has numerous initiatives relating to military health and housing leave policies. One that I was proud to get into this bill is an important provision that allows the Department of Defense and the Veterans Administration to do facility sharing.

What does that mean? It enables both the Pentagon and the VA to work on agreements to plan, design, and construct facilities to operate as VA and DOD shared medical facilities. That is going to help with readiness. That is going to help train our young Active-Duty medical forces. It is going to help with taking care of our veterans. And it is going to save money.

These are the kinds of provisions that we need. They are win-win-win between the VA and our veterans and the Active-Duty and Reserve forces that also need healthcare. And we are looking forward to taking advantage of that in Alaska and in other places in the country.

As I said at the outset, oftentimes what is not in a bill is as important as what is in a bill, and some of our Members—some of the far-left Members of the House—tried to plug into the NDAA—and they did so over in the House—a number of bills that really didn't have a lot to do with the military, but they were trying to move forward on a far-left agenda that they tried to attach in the NDAA.

Ironically, many of these Members really have no intention of ever voting for a strong NDAA, but they tried to plug things in, in the House bill. They did that in the House bill, but we were able to get rid of pretty much all of those—again, things like redflag laws that would confiscate firearms without due process.

There is another provision that I am really glad was not in there. There has been this narrative on the far left that somehow the men and women of our military—that our military institutions—are filled with a bunch of extremists. There are news reports that say this. None of it is based on data. None of it is based on data. And I have been pressing officials, saying: Give me data. You make these charges, which I dislike. I happen to know many, many

members of the military. They are some of the finest people in the country.

So we were able to get rid of some of the provisions in the House bill that—one was going to set up an office in the Pentagon on essentially trying to, in my view, do witch hunts on so-called extremists. It is an issue that the Pentagon needs to come up with data on and not make these false charges.

So, overall, this is a good day for our troops, for their families, for the Senate. It is a very bipartisan bill, with people coming together—Democrats and Republicans—on, in my view, one of the most important issues, if not the most important issue, we deal with here in the Congress: the national security of our Nation; keeping a strong, lethal military.

And when we do that, like we did today, that also sends a message to our adversaries: The United States, despite some challenges, still has the best, most lethal military force in the world, the most professional military force in the world. And this bill is going to help enhance that, and our adversaries need to take notice.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

ENERGY SAVINGS AND INDUSTRIAL
COMPETITIVENESS ACT

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I am really pleased to be on the floor this afternoon with my friend and colleague Senator ROB PORTMAN to talk about an issue that we have been working on, literally, for a decade, and it has been a bipartisan effort to focus on energy efficiency as a response to the energy needs in this country.

In 2011, Senator PORTMAN and I introduced S. 1000, which was the first version of the Energy Savings and Industrial Competitiveness Act. Over the years, it has been known as Shaheen-Portman, when we were in the majority on the Democratic side, or Portman-Shaheen, when the Republicans were in the majority.

But it doesn't matter what you call it. Our bill has proposed substantial investments in energy efficiency in this country, and what we did in the bill was to focus on the most energy-intensive sectors in our economy: buildings, residential and commercial, which is about a third of our energy use; the industrial sector; and the Federal Government. And, in the United States, the biggest user of energy is the Federal Government.

In a Congress that is divided along partisan lines on so many issues, energy efficiency is one priority that can bring us together on a bipartisan, bicameral basis to get things done. I always like to say that energy efficiency is one of those energy sources that you can support whether you are from New England or Ohio or Wyoming. Whether you support oil and gas or wind and solar, energy efficiency is the fastest, cheapest way to meet our energy needs.

Our legislation has always focused on low-cost tools and adoption of off-the-shelf technologies to save money for consumers and businesses, to make America more energy independent, and to reduce emissions.

And over the years, over the last decade, we have had some big wins. In 2015, President Obama signed a targeted version of Shaheen-Portman, the Energy Efficiency Improvement Act, into law. That bill helped align the interests of commercial building owners and their tenants to reduce energy consumption, and it allowed certain water heaters to help with demand response programs in rural areas.

Now, we have also made great strides through annual appropriations and administrative actions on things like energy efficiency standards for appliances.

Of course, we have also had some real defeats. But, though frustrating, as those defeats were, our resolve on this bill has never wavered, and when we re-introduced Portman-Shaheen last Congress, we worked to again incorporate feedback from stakeholders. For 7 months, our staffs held back-to-back meetings with constituents, stakeholders, and committee staff to ensure the bill addressed the energy needs in New Hampshire, Ohio, and the rest of the country.

Improving the efficiency of residential and commercial buildings through energy-saving building codes remained central to our bill, as did industrial energy efficiency provisions and improvements to Federal energy efficiency programs.

We also, again, included energy efficiency bills from our colleagues. So in that piece of legislation, we included Senators MURKOWSKI and MANCHIN's Federal Energy and Water Management Performance Act. We included Senators HOEVEN and MANCHIN's All-of-the-Above Federal Building Energy Conservation Act. And we included Senator COLLINS and WARNER's legislation coordinating the energy retrofitting for schools. Finally, as part of that, we included Senator BENNET and Senator ISAKSON's Sensible Accounting to Value Energy Act, or the SAVE Act.

So there were a lot of reasons why a number of Members of this body were interested in that legislation. But it was also a real savings because, according to the American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy, the policies from that bill would save consumers over \$51 billion on their energy bills. It would reduce carbon emissions by 1.3 billion metric tons, which is the equivalent of taking 280 million cars off the road for a year. And it would save 32 quadrillion Btus of energy, which is nearly the total energy use of all U.S. industries for 1 year.

Now, a previous study from ACEEE also estimated that the legislation would add more than 100,000 jobs to the economy. That bill passed the Energy and Natural Resources Committee by a vote of 14 to 6, and it was the fifth

time—fifth time—the bill passed in committee on a bipartisan basis.

Now, I am proud to say that the Energy Policy Act of 2020 that was signed into law by President Trump at the end of last year had several provisions from that Shaheen-Portman legislation that would streamline efficiency for schools, increase energy efficiency for Federal data centers, provide rebates for energy-efficient electric motors and transformers, and support Federal energy efficiency programs. But, of course, a piece of that bill was left on the cutting room floor, with the voluntary building codes, where so much of the savings was really incorporated.

But despite the success and the defeat in the last Congress, we came into this year as determined as ever. And as part of the original Gang of 10, Senator PORTMAN and I teamed up to ensure that energy efficiency was a big part of the bipartisan infrastructure framework.

We worked with Senator MANCHIN and our bipartisan colleagues to incorporate much of Shaheen-Portman with funding in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

I am going to turn it over to Senator PORTMAN for a few minutes so my voice can recover, and then I will pick it up when he finishes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, first of all, it is great to be on the floor with my friend JEANNE SHAHEEN and talk about something positive, something that we have been able to accomplish over the years—as she said, we have been at this over a decade—which is to encourage more energy efficiency. This is the ability for us to save energy by not using it. It is, therefore, sort of energy found. It is also an ability to improve the economy because it creates more jobs and makes us more competitive globally by having lower energy costs.

Think about the businesses in your State. The competitive nature of business today is that you are really competing with the Europeans and the Japanese and the Chinese and so on, and if you have higher energy costs and you are not energy efficient, you are not going to be competitive.

But if you are competitive, it adds jobs and makes the economy stronger. So the way I look at it, if you are interested in lower emissions and a better environment and, at the same time, you are interested in a better economy and creating jobs, then energy efficiency is the low-hanging fruit. That is the thing we can all agree with.

I applaud Senator SHAHEEN because she has been patient. We have both been patient, as our staffs have been, over the years, in getting pieces of our legislation in various bills that have passed this U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives and been signed into law by President Obama, President Trump, and now President Biden.

The most recent one was the infrastructure bill, and it is exciting what

we were able to get in there in terms of encouraging a better, more sustainable use of our energy resources in both the public sector and in the private sector.

Importantly, energy efficiency is also a part of a more reliable and resilient grid, which was part of our legislation: improving the electrical grid.

We have had some pretty severe weather events over the last year, as you know. I was just in Kentucky over the weekend, my neighboring State, helping out on the cleanup there. And, boy, electricity was out everywhere.

By improving energy efficiency, we can reduce demand, taking pressure off our power grids, and help create more stability.

These are some of the reasons why, since 2011, we have worked together to promote this energy efficiency bill called the Energy Savings and Industrial Competitiveness Act. Senator SHAHEEN called it Portman-Shaheen. I call it Shaheen-Portman because she is in charge now. The Senate is in the Democrats' majority, not ours. But we have worked together seamlessly. It has really been nonpartisan.

And, again, our goal has been, really, three different areas. One is residential and commercial buildings, because that is where we use a lot of energy. About 40 percent of the energy used in this country is used there.

Also, to ensure that the Federal Government does a better job. The Federal Government uses more energy than any other entity in the entire economy. By the way, it uses more energy than anybody in the world. And they don't do it very efficiently. In fact, there is a lot of energy inefficiency in our Federal Government.

So practice what you preach, right? So you have the government telling everybody else they have got to be green, but the government itself is not green. So our legislation requires that the Federal Government take steps to make it more energy efficient as well.

And then, finally, the manufacturing sector. Here is where there is a great opportunity, and manufacturers are really excited about it because we can provide some incentives, some best practices, and so on to make them more competitive globally by improving their energy efficiency.

We have created a big tent through this process, joining forces with our colleagues over the years for the purpose of supporting these kind of commonsense energy efficiency measures. A number of Senators who have had important parts of our legislation include Senator WICKER, Senator BENNET, Senator COLLINS, Senator MANCHIN, Senator HOEVEN, and others—Senator MURKOWSKI.

Our legislation has been voted on by this body before. In 2016, it passed the U.S. Senate. It also passed out of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee five separate times with bipartisan support.

By the way, in 2016, the vote was 85 to 12. Now, it was part of a larger en-

ergy package, but that was a pretty strong sign of bipartisan support for this. And it improved energy efficiency, in that case, in leased office space and improved energy savings from water heaters, as an example.

However, we have long recognized we need to do more to be able to save energy and save money. According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, residential and commercial buildings accounted for 40 percent of total energy consumption. In addition, reports from the U.S. Department of Energy have found that the Federal Government, again, is the single largest energy consumer in the country. And those studies have shown that our legislation as a whole would save consumers \$51 billion on energy bills, reduce carbon emissions by 1.3 billion tons—not by hurting jobs—by creating more jobs because it would add more than 100,000 jobs to the economy.

Over the years, our legislation has gained the support of industry, such as the National Association of Manufacturers, American Chemistry Council, and U.S. Chamber of Commerce. It has the support of commercial and real estate developers like BOMA and the Real Estate Roundtable, as well as from efficiency advocates and the environmental community like the Alliance to Save Energy, called ACEEE.

There is not a lot in Washington these days that has such a broad group of stakeholders supporting it. But there is a reason this legislation has received such broad support. It reduces emissions by reducing energy consumption. It also creates new jobs and lowers energy bills for consumers. And it does all this without putting any new mandates on the private sector. Particularly now, at a time of record inflation and rising energy costs, investing and improving energy efficiency is a smart way to help support hard-working families in Ohio and around the country.

The good news is that now, with the bipartisan infrastructure bill signed into law, we are much closer to seeing the benefits for the American people become a reality. The infrastructure bill, which we coauthored along with a bunch of our colleagues, included a total of \$2.5 billion for various energy efficiency projects. Included in these critical investments are a number of our provisions from Shaheen-Portman.

For example, we were able to include and fund programs to help incentivize contractors, homebuilders, and others to adapt and implement updated building codes. We were also able to fund programs that will help career skills development to help us train a workforce able to develop and install important new energy efficiency technologies. That has been one of our challenges.

For example, we include funding to enhance the Industrial Assessment Centers Program at the Department of Energy. This program allows students from around the country to conduct

energy assessments and small- and medium-sized manufacturers to improve their competitiveness, reduce waste, save energy, while at the same time training students in the field.

By the way, it is these kinds of small changes and upgrades that can result in big emissions and cost savings for businesses all around the country. So I am truly proud of what we have accomplished, including the infrastructure bill most recently.

Again, I want to thank my colleague Senator SHAHEEN for her tireless work to get this legislation across the finish line—again, energy efficiency, the low-hanging fruit. I look forward to continuing our partnership on these important issues.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I thank my colleague and partner in this effort, Senator PORTMAN. And as he pointed out, on November 15, President Biden became the third President to sign energy efficiency provisions from our bill into law.

Now, we still have a lot of work to do. But I just want to recognize current and former Shaheen-Portman staff who have helped us shepherd this bill through its many obstacles.

From my staff, I want to thank Trent Bauserman, Robert Diznoff, Ariel Marshall, Drew Story, and Janelle DiLuccia.

From Senator PORTMAN's staff, I want to thank Pam Thiessen, Steve Kittredge, Pat Orth, Sarah Peery, and Lydia Denis.

I would like to ask unanimous consent to enter the names of these current and former staff into the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

Energy and Natural Resources Committee staff who have played a pivotal role in the advancement of the Energy Savings and Industrial Competitiveness Act over the years:

Brie Van Cleve, Adam Berry, Al Stayman, Sam Fowler, Renae Black, Sarah Venuto, Angela Becker Dippman, Mary Louise Waggoner, Joshua Sheinkman, Colin Hayes, and Brian Hughes.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Finally, I want to thank the chairs and ranking members of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee who have played such a pivotal role over the years: Senators MANCHIN, MURKOWSKI, CANTWELL and WYDEN and their staffs.

Senator PORTMAN talked about all of the various groups who have been involved in helping to move this legislation where we are today. So I won't go back over those. But I will say, again, energy efficiency is a win, win, win. It creates jobs; it reduces cost to consumers; and it lowers emissions.

And as our economy recovers and grows, the investments in energy efficiency from our bipartisan infrastructure package are going to make sure that we use energy smarter. And I am going to continue to partner with Senator PORTMAN and others so we can unlock the full potential of energy efficiency for our growing economy.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as if in morning business for such time as I shall consume.

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

ETHIOPIA

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I think, with Christmas right around the corner, I can't think of a more appropriate time to deliver a short message here.

I have spoken several times about the situation in Ethiopia this year. It is a nation that is close to my heart for a lot of good reasons. It is close to other hearts around here. And if you are trying to understand the politics behind what is happening on the ground, it is very complicated.

But what is not complicated is that human suffering happens, and it is heartbreaking. We are talking about women and children and the elderly people. And they are dying every day. And it is totally unnecessary. I pray the violence stops very quickly and call on those who feel the same way to join me if they agree with this.

One of my big criticisms of our State Department is that they tend to go around the world telling other countries what they need to do instead of focusing on building lasting friendships and alliances.

This pushes countries away from us instead of bringing them toward us. And we can't afford to do that anymore with the rising problems that we are having right now—we have been talking on the floor—with both China and Russia. And those countries are all too eager to pick up the pieces that we leave behind. And this is happening right now. We are faced with a situation where we have countries that are out there that have actually better resources than we do in many areas.

Unfortunately, this is exactly what the Biden administration is doing in Ethiopia. Because Ethiopia has been unable to resolve its internal challenges quick enough for the administration, they are punishing Ethiopia. They are really punishing their own people here.

Most recently, this has been in the form of announcing that they plan to remove Ethiopia from the African Growth and Opportunity Act. The African Growth and Opportunity Act is known as AGOA. And it is something that is very significant. It is one that all of those in Africa and other countries are trying to get behind them.

And I think it is particularly significant right now that Christmas is upon us. It means Ethiopia would no longer have preferential trade capabilities with the United States for both import and export.

Now, this is devastating to a nation that has been such a great partner over the years. Ethiopia has always—ever since it came back during the Meles administration, and we kicked com-

munists out with the help of that administration, it has been our friend ever since then. Ethiopia has long been one of our last trading partners in Africa, in part, because its airline has a majority Boeing fleet. And because of that, many planes across the continent are being maintained in Ethiopia.

This flippant action makes our other partners doubt our commitment and pulls the rug out from many American business that have decided to make investments in Ethiopia instead of other countries in places around the world like Southeast Asia.

If we are willing to arbitrarily kick countries out of the agreement, other countries and American companies might not see participation in AGOA as worth the hassle you have to go through to get that. Every time we do something like this, we leave a vacuum that China is only too eager to fill.

Just after the Biden administration announced their plan to punish Ethiopia, the Chinese Government announced their own plan to purchase \$300 billion worth of goods from Africa over the next 3 years and to invest nearly \$10 billion.

The Chinese Foreign Minister promptly visited the principals in Ethiopia to support Prime Minister Abiy. Prime Minister Abiy, whom you might remember, has been a Prime Minister in Ethiopia for a long period of time. I can remember standing many years ago on this floor and lauding the virtues of him and what he has done for this country and the fact that he probably could be arguably the best educated Prime Minister in that country at any time. He didn't mention a word about the international challenges that he faces. They were there to support him, the democratically—we are talking about the Chinese now—democratically elected leader in Ethiopia. That is exactly what we should be doing. But we aren't—and China is.

We know that China and Russia are encroaching throughout Africa. They want nothing more than to create a division between the United States and Ethiopia and in countries across the continent.

And the good news is—if you can call it that—there is time before the Biden administration cancels AGOA benefits, and that would be for Ethiopia on January 1. But the door is closing. And January 1 is on us now.

So the Biden administration should take real steps to undoing the sanctions against the democratically elected government of Ethiopia and roll back the termination of AGOA benefits. And that would make a much happier Christmas for us and for Ethiopia.

With that, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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