

goal. And I will give an example because the developers of Revolution Wind have told me that our offshore wind facility is going to send power ashore at 9 cents per kilowatt hour into a grid whose average price is 18 cents. It is literally half the price to get power off Revolution Wind than it is to pay for the primarily natural-gas-fueled power that drives the New England grid. It is a 50-percent cost reduction; so it is affordable. Reliable? The wind blows like crazy out on the ocean; it is highly reliable.

In fact, Iowa, which has the biggest wind component of its electric grid, has actually treated wind as reliable baseload energy because where one turbine might not be spinning, there are plenty of others that are. So the people who plan for making sure that the lights don't go out—technical people—actually treat wind as reliable baseload energy through formulas that that ISO has developed.

And clean? Yes, it is clean. It burns no fossil fuel.

And yet the Trump administration twice has tried to shut down that project—twice. Just yesterday, they got blown up in Federal court for the second time when they tried for the second time to shut down that project. After \$5 billion had been invested in it, they wanted to shut it down.

So we have the way to go forward, but the administration doesn't want to go forward. They want to sabotage a wind project that will bring power onto the grid at about half the current grid cost.

Our attorney general in those proceedings proposed an affidavit and, in his pleadings, said that Revolution Wind would save hundreds of millions of dollars for New England customers.

The Trump Cabinet is running around pretending that that is not true. They pretend that it is expensive. They lie.

They had a chance to come into court, where it is a little harder to lie, and say: Oh, no, you are wrong. Your affidavit asserting hundreds of millions of dollars in savings when this comes online is wrong, and here is our case for why 9 cents is bigger than 18 cents or 9 cents isn't real—or whatever it is that they wanted to say.

They didn't. They didn't pipe up at all because they couldn't, because it is not true, and every grid operator proves that by calling up clean energy first because it is less expensive.

Again, these are technical people. They don't have a point to make. Their system calls the least expensive energy up first, and once you get through nukes and hydro, you are into solar, wind, and battery. And it is only once you are through all of that that you then get into the fossil fuel plants, because they are more expensive, and every grid operator can prove that to you in the way they actually operate our electric grids. They call up clean energy first because it is less expensive, period.

So it is unfortunate that here we are with this web of denial controlling so much of what happens in this building—fossil fuel industry dark money slashing through this building—and we can't get agreement that climate change is not a hoax, that climate science is sound science, and that we shouldn't turn off our research headlights as we go into the future.

Before I yield, let me just point out that the University of Kansas teaches climate science. The University of Kansas teaches climate science. It even teaches about this stuff. It has a course called "Anti-Environmentalism and Climate Change Denial in America," in addition to a "Climate and Climate Change" course, a "Climate Change and Hazards Planning" course, and a "Climate Science" course.

When your home State university is teaching the science of climate change, you ought to be able to agree that climate science is real and that climate change is not a hoax.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

ENERGY COSTS

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Rhode Island for his leadership and his clarity, and I want to underscore one of the most basic points that has to be made. And this is how times have changed.

We have changed what we are talking about because energy systems change, prices change, needs change, and the load changes. Right? But hearing the Senator from Kansas, it could have been 1998 or 2008 or 2018. It is the same talking points, and it is literally not true anymore.

There was a time when you could actually credibly say: Look, I understand there is a planetary emergency. But coal is so cheap. People are struggling. We have to balance the planetary emergency with the need for people to be able to cool and heat their homes and keep their lights on and all the rest of it.

All of that is out the window. Why? Because clean is cheap and cheap is clean. Clean energy is now the cheapest kind of electricity that we can get on the grid in any kind of reasonable timeframe.

There was a time where it was coal. That is definitely more expensive now. There was a time where it was gas, but the cost of gas keeps going up and up and up, for a couple of reasons—because we are exporting a lot of our gas but also because the turbines needed to convert natural gas into electrons—there is a huge backlog of them.

So we have an industrial renaissance happening in certain States, and we have all of this AI data center load coming up, and we have your normal American economy stuff happening. There are not enough electrons on the grid.

What happens when there is not enough of something? The people sell-

ing that thing raise the price. And that is exactly what is happening.

That is not a rhetorical flourish. Like, they have overnight prices. They have people whose job it is to find how we are going to meet everybody's needs, so when you flick that switch, everything just works. There are technicians in front of probably three or four screens figuring out "OK. I am going to buy this. This is the overnight price. This is the backup," all that.

What has changed over the last couple of years is that solar energy is it. Even if you don't care at all about the climate, you should still love solar energy. Why? Because nobody should be enthused about paying more for electricity.

What Donald Trump has done is very unique in American history, maybe even in world history—I am not too sure. It is normal for a President of the United States to try to alleviate economic pain for the citizens of the United States, and this is certainly the first President that I have experienced in the U.S. Senate but honestly the first President that I have even been aware of who is intentionally raising the price of something that we all need.

It is Secretary Burgum's order, and it is the way Secretary Wright is behaving, and it is the way Lee Zeldin is behaving, and it is the way people in the White House are behaving. They want to create a shortage of electricity. Why? First, they have ideology against solar and wind. Trump has a particular idea about wind and golf courses and birds or whatever. But they viewed, 10 years ago, solar as a kind of ideological project, as like a nice to have, United Nations, utopian view of the world.

Well, listen, solar is the most pragmatic thing we can put on the grid. Solar is really the only thing that is ready quickly. Why? Because nuclear energy has tremendous potential but is at least an 8- to 12-year timeframe, so we are talking about the 2030s. Geothermal also has tremendous potential, but they have not worked out all of the technical issues. And again, that is really a 2030 to 2040 play.

In the short run, we have a shortage. In the short run, we have a shortage, and Donald Trump is making it worse. Now, why would you make it worse? Well, when there are shortages of something, the people selling the thing get to charge more, and they are charging more.

So you, as the consumer—and again, I care deeply about this planetary crisis. It is actually the main reason I am in the U.S. Senate. I care deeply about this. But even if you don't, nobody wants to pay more than necessary on their electricity bills, and this national solar ban is making everybody pay more.

One in four Americans struggles to pay their electricity bills—one in four Americans. So what is Trump doing about it? Well, it is definitely worse than nothing.

The criticism about Biden during the inflation crisis was that he wasn't doing enough about inflation, but this is a different criticism. This is deliberate policy choices to drive up the cost of something that everybody needs.

By the way, that is also true for food and health insurance and electricity. All the stuff you need, he is creating a shortage of. Why? Because when there are shortages, people have to petition the King for mercy, and that is what is going on right now.

If you are close to him, if you can get dinner with him at Mar-a-Lago, you can get relief. There is enough money in the system for lots of people to get wealthy, but there is not enough money for a regular person living in Kaimuki, Honolulu, already paying three or four times the average electricity rate, paying more and more because there is a national policy driven by the President of the United States to create a shortage of electrons because he has decided that climate action is against his interests.

I think, if we are going to move forward on permitting reform but if we are going to move forward more generally on the question of affordability, we have to say that shortages are bad for prices. When there is not enough of something, people charge too much, and right now, we need as many electrons on the grid as we can possibly get, which means we need interstate transmission, and we need to not just permit new projects but at a minimum let the projects that have been almost totally built be plugged into the grid.

So this is not a climate speech; this is a "people can't afford their electricity bills" speech. And I just hope some of my Republican colleagues understand they have to abandon their old talking points because they don't apply anymore.

Cheap is clean, and clean is cheap.

I yield the floor.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Might the Senator be willing to retain the floor for a moment to yield for a question?

Mr. SCHATZ. Yes. I would be pleased to yield for a question through the Chair.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. In Rhode Island, we have a grid. ISO New England it is called. It is through that grid that electrons get from powerplant to the grid and from the grid to people's homes, and it is run as a basically common utility.

I assume Hawaii, which is geographically quite distinct, has its own grid.

So on our grid, this Revolution Wind project, as I said, is going to come on at 9 cents per kilowatt hour into a market where the prevailing rate is 18 cents. So if President Trump and his minions at Interior and EPW and Energy can stop that plant, they are making Rhode Islanders, New Englanders, buy 18-cent power instead of 9-cent power. So that raises the price for everybody.

By the way, for those of you who are listening, the ISO grid, like almost all

the others—the price at any given minute on the grid for electricity is set by the highest cost plant that has to operate to meet that level of demand. So if you can get that 9-cent cost to be the highest cost, that is it for everybody, but if you got to go back to 18, that is also it for everybody. That plant just doesn't raise costs to pay itself back; it raises grid costs for every electron that is running at that same time.

So what that produces is, sticking with the 9- and 18-cent example, the 18-cent cost comes out of ratepayers' pockets. They have to pay their electric bill at 18 cents. They could have paid only 9 cents; instead, they are going to pay 18. The difference is going to go to the fossil fuel industry, to the big donors of Trump.

I call this a scam that Trump and his minions, for their big fossil fuel donors, are deliberately holding clean energy off the grid, which is cheaper, so that the grid can't go to it, has to go to higher and higher cost fossil fuel plants, so consumer costs go up. But that additional money that consumers have to pay goes to the fossil fuel industry, which gave him hundreds of millions of dollars to be elected, and this is payback for them.

Only Trump is no fool. Why pay it back himself or ask his political supporters to pay it back when he can go to electric consumers and bury it in their bill and make consumers pay to send hundreds of millions of dollars to these big donors.

So that is what we see in New England.

On the Hawaii grid, how does this work also?

Mr. SCHATZ. Well, our grid is different, obviously, because we have a series of islands, and they are kind of self-contained grids. But our challenge is, to meet the load, we need electrons. And we do the dirtiest and most expensive thing, which is to light low-sulfur fuel oil on fire to create electrons. That is just north of like, you know, wood-burning stoves in terms of its efficiency. It is not a good way to do it economically, and it is not a good way to do it in terms of climate impact.

So the Hawaiian Electric Company has a bunch of clean-energy projects on the grid because we have—the net capacity factors for our wind project on land are comparable to offshore wind. That is how much the wind blows in parts of essentially Maui and Hawaii Island. The southern part of Hawaii Island is incredible. People don't believe the numbers until they go down there and measure them. It is as if it is an offshore wind platform, but it is land-based. So we have ample resources to power our grid.

When I was a kid in the Hawaii Legislature, I still remember the Hawaiian Electric Company would come and testify and say: The maximum penetration of renewables onto the grid is 15 percent. After that, you get power quality problems.

By the way, that was true when that person studied electrical engineering in the seventies. That was actually true. The person wasn't lying. It is just that we have figured out a lot of this. It is not that we don't continue to need dispatchable power or baseload power; it is that grids are getting really, really smart and capable of handling high penetration of intermittent renewable energy. And when you layer them on top of each other, they are no longer functionally intermittent.

So I kind of was like—I am sort of like from the future, right, because 10 years ago, 15 years ago, it was cheaper for us to move in the direction of clean energy in Hawaii, but you couldn't say that on the continental United States side. And we moved in that direction as fast as we possibly could and tried to provide some measure of relief for ratepayers.

But now what is going to happen is we are going to have to buy a bunch of electrons in the most expensive fashion. We are the most isolated majorly populated place on the planet, and everybody pays more for everything, and now electricity bills are going to go up because of the OBBA.

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

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 6:56 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, January 14, 2026, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

ADEMOLA ADEWALE-SADIK, OF NEW YORK, TO BE UNITED STATES DIRECTOR OF THE AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK FOR A TERM OF FIVE YEARS, VICE OREN E. WHYCHE-SHAW.

FEDERAL LABOR RELATIONS AUTHORITY

CHARLTON ALLEN, OF NORTH CAROLINA, TO BE GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE FEDERAL LABOR RELATIONS AUTHORITY FOR A TERM OF FIVE YEARS, VICE JULIA AKINS CLARK, TERM EXPIRED.

NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION

MATTHEW ANDERSON, OF COLORADO, TO BE DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR OF THE NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION, VICE PAMELA A. MELROY, RESIGNED.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

JEFFREY ANDERSON, OF GEORGIA, TO BE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA ON THE COUNCIL OF THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION, WITH THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

BRIAN BARBER, OF LOUISIANA, TO BE UNITED STATES MARSHAL FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF LOUISIANA