

sliding lower. At the same time, that proportion of energy that used to be provided by nuclear is being provided by natural gas. While there are some compelling environmental reasons that natural gas is an attractive energy source for electric production, it contributes to the depletion of an important American natural resource, to use an energy source which is a direct provider of energy, to become an indirect provider of energy by converting natural gas into electric generation. I applaud the provisions of this legislation that will, hopefully, begin to re-energize a safe and secure contribution to the diversity of our electric generation capacity through nuclear.

In the coming years, we will see ups and downs in energy prices. We have been on a roller coaster for the past several months, seeing some of the highest and some of the lowest gasoline prices in recent memory. We will likely see times of turmoil. We are likely to see oil increasingly being used as a weapon in geopolitical disputes. We are likely to see times of calm. During those times, energy seems to be the least of our worries.

But we have before us now an opportunity, an opportunity to create an energy policy for the next generations of Americans, the next generations of citizens of this planet. We are given the opportunity to develop an energy policy that can help us leave a cleaner, safer, more prosperous world, and a world in which energy is used to serve human purposes, not as a source of intimidation.

Our grandchildren will thank us.

I thank the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada is recognized.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have spoken to the Senator from Alaska. The Senator from Alaska indicated he wishes to speak for some time tonight, and I have indicated to him we have a few matters we need to do to close the business of the Senate for today.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 9:45 a.m. on Thursday, April 18, following the opening proceedings, the Senate resume consideration of S. 517 and that there be debate until 11:45 a.m. with respect to the cloture motions filed, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees; further, that the time from 11:25 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. be controlled as follows: 11:25 a.m. to 11:35 a.m. under the control of the Republican leader, or his designee; and from 11:35 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. under the control of the majority leader, or his designee; that at 11:45 a.m., without further intervening action or debate, the Senate proceed to vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the Stevens second-degree amendment No. 3133, that the mandatory quorum required under rule XXII be waived; provided further that Members have until 10:45 a.m. to file any second-degree amendments.

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

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, APRIL 18, 2002

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until the hour of 9:45 a.m. on Thursday, April 18; that following the prayer and the pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and the Senate resume consideration of the energy reform bill.

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

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

THE 4TH ANNUAL NATIONAL BREAST CANCER CONFERENCE FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN

• Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, during the weekend of April 19, 2002, as we commemorate Cancer Awareness Month, hundreds of women from around the country will gather in my home town, Detroit, MI, to celebrate breast cancer survivorship among African American women. This is a very special group of women, in that they are all survivors of the most common type of cancer of women in the United States. I take great pleasure in welcoming them to Detroit and want to bring to your attention, the many accomplishments of the sponsoring organizations and the goals of this conference.

The 4th Annual National Breast Cancer Conference, which is sponsored by the Karmanos Cancer Institute, Detroit's nationally renowned cancer treatment center and breast care center, and Sisters' Network, Inc. presents an aggressive agenda focusing on the survivorship of African American Women who have, and who will encounter the challenge of breast cancer, a disease which has claimed far too many lives of the members of any community, but within the African American community, 28 percent more than other ethnic groups. According to a recent report appearing in the Journal of the National Cancer Institute, researchers said that studies have shown that black women are more likely to be diagnosed with late stage breast cancer and to have a shorter survival time than white women. We should all find these statistics unacceptable. During this conference, with the guidance of medical professionals from around the country, including Detroit's own Dr. Lisa Newman, Associate Director of the Waltz Comprehensive Breast Center, there will be discussions on how to eradicate all of those barriers women of the African American community face when assaulted by this dreaded disease.

I am proud to acknowledge the work and dedication of Cassandra Woods, my Michigan Chief of Staff, who is the president of the Greater Metropolitan

Detroit Chapter of Sisters' Network, Inc. and a breast cancer survivor and the national president and founder of the Network, Ms. Karen Jackson. These women and the members of the 37 chapters from around the country are committed to increasing local and national attention to the devastation that breast cancer has in the African American community. These women believe that through education, advocacy, research, and support for each other, they can make a marked difference in breast cancer outcomes and the rate of survival among their sisters.

I applaud this effort, I support this effort, and I ask my colleagues to join me in wishing the best of outcomes for this conference and with the challenges ahead.●

THE UNITED STATES/RUSSIAN PLUTONIUM DISPOSITION AGREEMENT

• Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I rise today to bring the Senate's attention to a matter of tremendous international importance to our efforts to prevent the terrorists' use of weapons of mass destruction.

I wish to talk about the United States/Russian plutonium disposition agreement, a commitment between our two countries to each permanently dispose of 34 metric tons of plutonium from nuclear weapons. Thirty-four tons is enough material to make over 4,000 nuclear weapons.

I was pleased to help develop aspects of that agreement during several interactions with the Russian leadership of Minatom, both here and in Russia. I was in Moscow with our President in 1998 when the first agreement was initiated. I believe this agreement represents one the most significant accomplishments between the United States and Russia in the last 10 years in our joint efforts to keep the material and technology of weapons of mass destruction out of the hands of those that seek to do us harm.

The agreement basically commits the United States and Russia to turning 34 tons of plutonium into fuel that can be burned in commercial nuclear power plants. In this way, electricity is produced and the used fuel is left in a condition that makes it unusable in the future for nuclear bombs. Facilities will be built in both the United States and Russia to perform this work.

Our Government completed a 4-year process to decide what type of facilities was needed for this disposition mission, and where those facilities should be built. The United States considered four sites, Washington State, Idaho, Texas, and South Carolina, and after a vigorous competition in which the State of South Carolina lobbied very hard to get the mission, the decision was made to site the disposition facilities in South Carolina.

Now, South Carolina is hesitating. The plutonium disposition agreement

is being imperiled by the unwillingness of the State of South Carolina to reach an agreement with the Department of Energy on taking shipment of the plutonium identified for disposition and building the required facilities.

It is appropriate for the Governor of South Carolina to insist on every assurance that his State will be treated fairly, and will not simply become the permanent storage site for unwanted nuclear material if for some reason the plutonium agreement should fall apart.

But the Governor has done that, he has succeeded, he has won. He should be congratulated.

The Governor has gotten the Secretary of Energy to provide South Carolina all of the assurances they never got from the Clinton administration, including full funding for the MOX program, a strict construction schedule, and a number of mechanisms, including statutory language and other measures, to ensure that the agreement will be legally enforceable.

However, the Governor is apparently insisting that this matter should be thrown to the courts and resolved through the mechanism of a court ordered consent decree. Putting the courts in charge of executive branch non-proliferation and foreign policy affairs will slow our ability to meet our goals of reducing Russian nuclear material stockpiles, and will allow others who are opposed to the program's goals have a voice in their implementation. Ultimately, I fear America's national security will be undermined.

Further delay in reaching agreement with South Carolina will undermine the United States/Russian plutonium disposition agreement. We must move forward with the construction of the MOX plant that will be used to dispose of the plutonium at issue in order to honor our commitments to the Russian Federation. That will be very difficult, if not impossible, in the face of litigation from the Governor of the State where the plant will be located.

The Russians will not go along to reduce their plutonium inventory unless we do. A failure in this program means more material may end up on the black market where terrorists could have access to it.

For 50 years now the State of South Carolina, like my home State of New Mexico, has hosted some of the most important facilities within our nuclear weapons complex. For 50 years, tens of thousands of the sons and daughters of South Carolina proudly toiled in relative anonymity so that the rest of the country, and the world, could enjoy the peace provided by our nuclear shield during the long, dark days of the Cold War. I am proud of the citizens of South Carolina and their unique service for our county.

Today, the children and grandchildren of the previous generations of South Carolina heroes have a tremendous opportunity to almost literally, as the prophet Isaiah said, "beat their swords into plowshares and their

spears into pruning hooks." They stand on the cusp of a grand new opportunity to lead the world community in converting nuclear weapons to electric power while at the same time keeping the material out of the hands of would be terrorists.

We must go forward with this important agreement. Thus, I will close today by urging both the Secretary of Energy and the Governor of South Carolina to work together to resolve their differences, move out together, and not threaten this effort by resorting to litigation.●

NATIONAL LIBRARY WEEK

● Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, as a strong supporter of Federal programs to strengthen and protect libraries, I am pleased to recognize April 14–20 as National Library Week. This is the 44th anniversary of this national observance and its longevity is evidence of the great importance our Nation places on libraries, books, reading and education.

National Library Week grew out of 1950's research that showed a troublesome trend—Americans were spending more money on radios and television and less on buying books. The American Library Association and the American Book Publishers joined forces and introduced the first National Library Week in 1958 in an effort to encourage people to read and to use their libraries.

When the free public library came into its own in this country in the 19th century, it was, from the beginning, a unique institution because of its commitment to the principle of a free and open exchange of ideas, much like the Constitution itself. Libraries continue to be an integral part of all that our country embodies: freedom of information, an educated citizenry, and an open and enlightened society.

I firmly believe libraries play an indispensable role in our communities. They promote reading and quench a thirst for knowledge among adults, adolescents, and children. More importantly, they provide the access and resources to allow citizens to obtain timely and reliable information that is so necessary in our fast-paced society. In this age of rapid technological advancement, libraries are called upon to provide not only books and periodicals, but many other valuable resources as well audio-visual materials, computer services, Internet access terminals, facilities for community lectures and performances, tapes, records, video-cassettes, and works of art for exhibit and loan to the public.

Libraries provide a gateway to a new and exciting world for all the place where a spark is often struck for disadvantaged citizens who for whatever reason have not had exposure to the vast stores of knowledge and emerging technology available to others. In this information age, they play a critical role in bridging the digital divide.

Many families cannot afford personal computers at home, yet the role of computers has become almost necessary to a basic educational experience. The children of these families would suffer without the access to emerging technology that libraries provide to all patrons regardless of income. In addition, special facilities libraries provide services for older Americans, people with disabilities, and hospitalized citizens.

During National Library Week, I wish to salute those individuals who are members of the library community and work so hard to ensure that our citizens and communities continue to enjoy the tremendous rewards available through our libraries. Library staff, volunteers and patrons work to ensure existing libraries run smoothly and have adequate resources, as well as advocate for increased funding and new libraries.

I am proud that Maryland is a State of readers. Recent statistics show that Maryland citizens borrowed more public library materials per person than those of almost any other State, nearly 9 per person. In addition, 67 percent of the State's population are registered library patrons. We are lucky to have 24 public library systems, providing a full range of library services to all Maryland citizens and a long tradition of open and unrestricted sharing of resources. The State Library Network that provides interlibrary loans to the State's public, academic, special libraries and school library media centers has enhanced this policy. Marylanders have responded to this outstanding service by showing their continued enthusiasm and support for our public libraries. I have worked closely with members of the Maryland Library Association, colleges and universities and others involved in the library community throughout the State, and I am very pleased to join with them and citizens throughout the Nation in this week's celebration of "National Library Week." I look forward to continuing this relationship with those who enable libraries to provide the unique and vital services available to all Americans.●

PASSAGE OF THE HEALTH CARE SAFETY NET AMENDMENTS OF 2001 (S. 1533)

● Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, almost 39 million Americans wake up each morning, hoping that they or their families do not face illness or a serious accident—because they have no health insurance. Many more are underinsured and do not have access to a good health provider. They awake hoping that they and their loved ones will not get sick. For many, falling ill can mean financial ruin, or even death, because they cannot afford the critical health services they need.

During this time when our country struggles through the worst economic downturn in a decade, we must find innovative ways to provide access to