

program next year, I intend to work to fund additional bicycle paths and enhance existing paths as use of these paths increases over time.

THE FAILURE TO PASS AN ENERGY BILL

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, it is with a tremendous amount of frustration and disappointment that I come before the Senate to discuss the failure of efforts in the 107th Congress to craft an energy bill. I have been a long-time advocate of a comprehensive national policy that would address the national and economic security aspects of this country's growing demand for energy, as well as the importance of protecting our environment.

I was very proud of the work the Senate had done this year to produce this legislation. Under the leadership of Majority Leader TOM DASCHLE and Senate Energy and Natural Resources Chairman JEFF BINGAMAN, the Senate did what many in Washington thought impossible—we produced balanced and responsible energy legislation combining increased domestic production of conventional fuels, expanded use of alternative and renewable energy sources, and energy conservation and efficiency programs. Unfortunately, in our rush to complete work on a number of pending matters, many Senators chose to not proceed with Conference negotiations, acquiescing in what I would characterize as a strategy to scuttle this worthwhile bill.

Perhaps the thought was that a better bill—or at least one that better met a different set of priorities—could be crafted next year. Candidly, I doubt it. I believe the demise of the Energy bill this year is unfortunate for West Virginia, and for the entire nation. During a nearly year-long debate on the complex components of the energy bill, my position as a senior Majority member of the Senate Finance Committee allowed me to influence the legislation so that its end results would be good for consumers, workers, and industries in my state of West Virginia. I am concerned that a new set of circumstances confronting the 108th Congress will result in a bill that does not serve my state nearly as well.

While the need to grapple with energy issues will not go away, no matter what other factors are to be considered, Congress will be forced to act in a vastly changed budgetary climate. The growing deficit, additional proposed tax cuts, and the need to fund both a war on terrorism and a possible war with Iraq, will inhibit the ability of Congress to make any significant outlays to improve our energy situation.

The 2002 energy bill was a bipartisan effort. Perhaps most significantly for West Virginia, there was general agreement among Senate conferees that the final bill should include meaningful Clean Coal incentives. I worked very hard to see that the Senate-passed bill

included incentives for the installation of Clean Coal technologies on smaller existing coal-burning facilities, such as we have in West Virginia. The version passed by the House would have bypassed existing facilities altogether—putting thousands of West Virginia jobs at risk and jeopardizing the health of all West Virginians downwind of these plants. As a member of the House-Senate Conference Committee reconciling the two versions of the energy bill, I was able to ensure that the final legislation included incentives for existing facilities. If the energy bill is considered again in the 108th Congress, I will likely again be a conferee, but my ability to apply pressure to benefit the people and environment of our state will be lessened.

I also worked closely with a number of colleagues from both parties to see that the bill included incentives to capture coal mine methane, a deadly hazard in coal mines, and a potent greenhouse gas when vented to protect the lives of miners. I was proud to join with members from both sides of the aisle to extend credits for the production of oil and natural gas from non-conventional sources. Without this credit, the natural gas industry in the entire Appalachian Basin would likely cease to exist. Likewise, I was pleased to join in a bipartisan effort to promote the use of alternative fuels and alternative fuel vehicles. Similarly, I joined colleagues from across the political spectrum to further research and development and create tax incentives for the production of electricity from renewable sources, and to increase energy efficiency in homes, commercial buildings, and appliances.

In fact, what most frustrates me is that this product of so much bipartisan cooperation is dead because of what may have been a cynical calculation to reconsider later a few issues with which there will never be truly bipartisan agreement.

If the next Congress does revisit the issue of a national energy policy, I am certain that those in charge will put much-needed emphasis on domestic production. At the same time, I have serious doubts that the incoming congressional majorities will toil quite as hard to balance that priority with the equally necessary issue of protecting the environment. In the same vein, while I suspect that there will be new efforts to exploit the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and on our other public lands, regardless of the minimal amounts of mineral resources that may be recoverable, I am not confident that a new bill's authors will show the same zeal to expand our domestic energy production from clean and abundant renewable resources.

This has been a hard fight, and while not perfect, the legislation we were so close to producing would have been the truly comprehensive and balanced energy policy that I have been calling for since I came to Congress eighteen years ago. Since then, I have continu-

ously urged my colleagues in the Congress, as well as both Republican and Democratic presidential administrations, to work together on a responsible energy policy for this country. The 107th Congress was prepared to deliver a balanced, comprehensive energy plan for the President's signature. Now, for a number of reasons the energy bill is dead, putting the American economy and the American environment at risk. I find this frustrating, short-sighted, and extremely unfortunate.

U.S. LEADERSHIP IN AEROSPACE—TODAY AND TOMORROW

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I rise to discuss a core factor in America's leadership and strength in the new century: aerospace. The aerospace industry dominates the telecommunication and transportation world, while military aerospace expertise has defended the Nation and served as the eyes and ears of our forces overseas.

Congress established an Aerospace Commission last year to study the state of the American aerospace industry in the global economy and national security and to assess the importance of the domestic aerospace industry for the future security of the Nation. It is appropriate that the Aerospace Commission released its report on the future of the aerospace industry this Monday during the final debate on homeland security, an area only beginning to appreciate what aerospace can offer.

The Aerospace Commission reviewed the range of military, civil, and commercial aspects of aviation and space and studied the key components of the aerospace community—government, industry, labor, and academia. The Commission benefited from the broad range of expertise and experience among its Commissioners, including former Astronaut Buzz Aldrin, former Defense Under Secretary John Hamre, and Director of the Hayden Planetarium Dr. Neil Tyson.

The Commission offered several recommendations to correct the weakening of the aerospace sector. Each recommendation addressed a different critical factor that is showing signs of fatigue. I would like to discuss the Commission's recommendations relating to the aerospace workforce and education.

The aerospace industry, like many of our high-tech sectors, has a workforce crisis. According to the Commission report, our Nation has lost over 600,000 scientific and technical aerospace jobs in the past 13 years. These job losses, first due to reduced spending in defense, then due to acquisitions and mergers of aerospace companies, and later to foreign competition in the commercial aerospace market, represent a significant loss of skill and expertise. Many of the talented people