VOTE EXPLANATION

• Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I have the great honor of being in Washington State today in order to welcome home the USS *Lincoln*. After a 10-month deployment, including valuable service in the recent war against Iraq, the men and women of the USS *Lincoln* finally reach Everett and Washington today. Unfortunately in order to be present for this important homecoming in my State it was necessary for me to miss the vote on the confirmation of Cecilia Altonaga to the Federal District Court for the Southern District of Florida. If I had been present, I would have voted ''yea'' to confirm Cecilia Altonaga.•

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will return to legislative session.

ENERGY POLICY ACT OF 2003—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, are we back on the energy bill? Is that the order of business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. We are.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I know my colleagues have made presentations on the energy bill. The chairman of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, Senator DOMENICI, and the ranking Member, Senator BINGAMAN, have made presentations on the energy bill. I wanted to come to the floor to speak about this piece of legislation.

There are some provisions in this legislation that I think are particularly worthy and some that are not. There are some provisions that should be in the bill and, as of yet, are not in the bill. My hope is that as we debate and discuss the energy issue on the floor of the Senate, we will be able to construct a bipartisan energy bill that advances this country's energy interests. That ought to be our goal.

It is a fact that our country, for well over a century, has been wedded to the use of oil, particularly for the purpose of moving our transportation fleet. Because we are so chained to the use of oil—and especially now chained to the use of foreign oil, with 55 percent of what we use coming from places outside of our country—most believe that our economy is at risk.

What do I mean by ''at risk''? I mean that if, God forbid, some morning we wake up and discover that the supply of oil coming from areas of the world that are deeply troubled is somehow shut off, our economy will be flat on its back. I do not think there is any dispute about that.

The 55 percent of oil that now comes from outside of our borders is expected to increase to nearly 65, 66 percent in the coming years. Is that advancing this country's economic and energy security? No, not at all. In fact, it injures our country's opportunities in both the intermediate and long term.

So the question for us with respect to energy policy is, How do we become less dependent on energy that comes from outside of our country? How do we produce more, over which we have control? How do we conserve more? After all, conservation is another form of producing. How do we increase the efficiency of appliances and other items that we use energy for in our daily lives? And how do we increase the role of limitless and renewable supplies of energy? Those are the key questions for all of us, it seems to me, in trying to write a better energy bill.

As we see more and more States begin to experiment with restructuring and deregulation, we also need to address in this bill the question, ''How do we prevent from happening once again what happened on the west coast, particularly in California, where there was grand theft committed by some companies now under criminal investigation?''

Enron, of course, was one company that was subject to these allegations. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission is now taking action against a number of companies. But there is no question about what happened with respect to electricity restructuring in California: that some companies engaged in basic criminal wrongdoing, and that the consumers on the west coast were bilked to the tune of not millions or hundreds of millions of dollars but billions of dollars. That is why I call it grand theft.

How do we prevent that from happening in the future? I will talk about that in just a couple moments.

But let me put up a chart that shows from where we have received the imports of crude oil, by country of origin, in a recent year. No. 1 was Saudi Arabia, 588 million barrels of crude oil in 2001 from Saudi Arabia; and then you have Mexico, Canada, Venezuela, Nigeria, and Iraq as No. 6.

You can see, if you look at this list, we are importing oil from very troubled parts of the world. The future opportunity of growth and economic opportunity in this country is to be able to continue this supply. Our economy depends on it. So should we become less dependent on that? The answer is yes. Will we in this bill? I hope the answer will be yes.

One of the points I have made is about our dependence on foreign oil. We import 55 percent of that which we consume. Fifty-five percent comes from off of our shores. That is expected to go to 66, 68 percent by the year 2025.

Nearly all of our cars and trucks in the United States run on gasoline. They are the main reason America imports so much oil. Two-thirds of the 20 million barrels of oil that we use each day is used for transportation, and it is the fastest growing part of our energy consumption.

I have mentioned many times on the floor—and I will not bore you with the whole story—that my first car, when I was a young teenager, was a 1924 Model T Ford that I restored. It took me a couple years to restore this old Model T. When I did, I finally sold it. But the fact is, you put gasoline in a 1924 Model T Ford the same way you put it in a 2003 Ford. Nothing has changed. You pull up to the pumps, and you just pump gas in the tank. That is the way it is; that is the way it has been; it is the way it is going to be, unless we change.

So can we, after three-quarters of a century, or a century, decide to take a look at what is consumed in transportation, especially for our vehicle fleet, and decide that we do not have to run gasoline through our carburetors in order to propel our vehicles? Can we do that? I hope the answer is yes.

Someone who trains elephants once told me a story about why elephants stand with a cuff on their leg that has a small chain attached to a little stake in the ground. I saw it first when a small circus came to our town. It was a really small circus because my town had a population of only 350, 400 people, so they only had 1 elephant.

But they put a cuff around the elephant's back leg, with a small chain attached to a little stake that was stuck in the ground, and the elephant never moved. I always wondered, how could they have an elephant stand there, when clearly that little stake in the ground was not going to hold the elephant, but the elephant never tried to pull it.

Well, that is because when they capture elephants in Thailand, what they do is put a cuff around the elephant's leg attached to a big chain, and they tie it to a banyan tree. And for a week, week and a half, 2 weeks, the elephant does nothing but pull and tug and, with all of his might, try to pull away from that banyan tree. But it is not to be. That elephant is chained to that banyan tree, and pretty soon the elephant stops because the elephant understands it cannot get loose. So it never again tries. They take the chain off the banyan tree and put a little stake in the ground, and the elephant never moves; it just stays there, understanding it cannot move from that stake.

That is kind of the way we are. We are kind of like the elephant and the banyan tree with respect to our dependence on foreign oil. We never think that what we can do is pole-vault over this to new technologies.

At the end of this debate, if what the Senate will have exhibited to the American people is that our debate is really only about two things—the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and CAFE standards—shame on us, because that is the same old debate we have every 10, 15, and 25 years when we talk about energy. Are both of these issues important? Sure, they are. But it is more important to evaluate how, in 5, 10, 15, 25, and 50 years from now, our children and grandchildren will be driving vehicles that are not running gasoline through the carburetors.