

Lugar	Reed	Snowe
McCain	Reid	Specter
Mikulski	Roberts	Stabenow
Murkowski	Rockefeller	Stevens
Murray	Sarbanes	Talent
Nelson (FL)	Schumer	Voinovich
Nelson (NE)	Shelby	Warner
Pryor	Smith	Wyden

NAYS—20

Allard	Ensign	Miller
Allen	Enzi	Nickles
Burns	Gregg	Santorum
Chambliss	Inhofe	Sessions
Cornyn	Kyl	Sununu
Craig	Lott	Thomas
Crapo	McConnell	

NOT VOTING—2

Domenici Kerry

The amendment (No. 2937) was agreed to.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until the hour of 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:45 p.m., recessed until 2:18 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. FRIST).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I may be witnessing a first to see our majority leader as the Presiding Officer at this moment. Welcome to the podium. We are pleased to have you there.

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY AND INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT FOR EVERYONE ACT—Continued

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, we are debating welfare reform. It is critical to our country that we do this and revitalize it. It is a major piece of legislation that has been very successful over the years, getting people out of welfare into a productive job in our economy.

I don't know who the historian was who once said it. He was an economist and a historian. He said, The greatest form of welfare in the world is a good job in the private sector—we know that to be a fact—a good well-paying job.

When you cannot find that, welfare in our country is that safety net we have designed and defined for those who truly need it, but recognizing that it is not a place to stay; it is a place to catch you if you fall, to help you, and to provide for you and your family, but only in the temporary form so we can get people off of welfare and back out into the private sector and into a job.

In a few moments, the Senator from Massachusetts is going to talk about jobs and level of pay in those jobs. I thought for just a few moments it would be appropriate as we talk about welfare and as we talk about jobs and how much we pay for jobs as a minimum wage, that we ought to talk about job creation in this country and how critically important it is.

Some have said our recovery out of this recession has been jobless. Well, that is not true. A lot of jobs are being created out there, and a lot of people

are now going back to work—not as rapidly as we had hoped they would, but certainly they are headed back to work.

NATIONAL ENERGY POLICY

But there is a dark cloud over the horizon, and that dark cloud is there today because the Congress of the United States, and the Senate in particular, a year ago denied this country a new national energy policy and the ability to begin to produce energy, once again.

We are no longer energy independent. That one driving force we had in the economic matrix that said we could produce something for less—because we had the great ingenuity of the American workforce and because the input of energy was less than anywhere else in the world, so we could produce it better and we could produce it for less cost—is no longer true today.

If you went out this morning to refuel your car before you headed to work, you paid at an all-time high level of gas prices. Why? Because the Senate of the United States denied this country a national energy policy.

We know it is happening. We have seen it headed in that direction for over 7 years. Many of us have pled on this floor to develop that policy to get us back into production. But, no, we are not into production, we are not producing at a level we could be and we should be. We are not creating all the kinds of alternative fuels we ought to be. Why? Because we have not established a national energy policy in the last 8 years.

The world has changed a great deal. We are now over half dependent on foreign sources of oil. Of course, there are many who will rush to the floor and point a finger at OPEC or point a finger at the political turmoil in Venezuela and say: Well, that is their problem, and it is their fault we are paying higher energy prices. Or we will have that proverbial group that will run out and point their finger at big oil.

Why don't we point the finger at the Senate, for once, which has denied this country a national energy policy? The Senator from New Mexico was on the floor a few moments ago, Mr. BINGAMAN. He worked 2 years ago to get one. I helped him, and we could not quite get there.

Then the other Senator from New Mexico did produce a policy, and we passed it in a bipartisan way. It went to the House, and we conferenced it, and the House passed the conference. It came back here. It fell apart. It fell apart for one little reason or another, but the bottom line was the politics of it. The Senate of the United States has again denied the consumer and the working man and woman the right to have an energy source and a competitive energy price to go to work on, or to work with when they get to work, or to have for recreation, or to have to heat their home, or to have to turn the lights on in their house, and to illuminate and energize the computer they use.

The driving force of the economy of this country is not the politics of the street today; it is the politics of energy. It always has been. When we have competitive, moderate-to-low energy prices, the American worker can produce and compete with any workforce in the world. But today we are slowly but surely denying them that.

Natural gas is at an all-time high. Gas at the pump is at an all-time high. Electricity prices in many areas around this country are at an all-time high. The great tragedy is, many of those prices are artificially inflated because of the politics of the issue, because this Senate has denied the American worker and the American consumer a national energy policy.

Now, some say, well, the wealthy are going to get wealthy off of this. What about the poor? Has anybody ever calculated that high energy prices impact poor people more than any other segment in our society?

If you are a household with an average annual income of \$50,000, you only spend about 4 percent of your income on energy. But if you are a household with an income between \$10,000 and \$24,000, you spend 13 percent; you spend a higher proportion of your total income on energy. If you are a household of \$10,000 or less, or at about 130-plus percent of poverty, you spend almost 30 percent of everything you make on energy—whether it is the gas you put in your car, or the throwing of a switch to illuminate the light bulb in your ceiling, or the heat for your home.

High energy prices impact poor people more, and yet we will still hear these great allegations on the floor that somebody is going to get rich off of energy.

No. Poor people are going to get poorer with higher energy prices. That is the impact and the reality of the problems we face.

The United States is making do now with a lot less energy on a per capita basis. Some say: We can just conserve our way out of this situation. We are doing a very good job in conservation today than we did, let's say, 20 years ago.

Let me give you a figure or two. In the last three decades, the U.S. economy has grown 126 percent, but energy use has grown only 30 percent. In other words, as our economy grows today, as a rate of a unit of production, we use less energy. Why? Efficiencies, new technologies. But as we grow, we are still going to need more energy. So the old argument about conserving your way out—and, oh, my goodness, if I have heard it once on the Senate floor in the last 6 years, I have heard it 2 or 3 times, that automobile fuel consumption has dropped 60 percent in that 20-year period. And we ought to be proud of that.

That is partly a work of the Senate, but that is also the new technologies and efficiencies. Per capita oil consumption is down 20 percent since 1978.