

Now the future is brighter in many areas because of new, cleaner technologies. We can have a brighter future of energy supplies if we let all these new technologies work for us.

We can also have a brighter future of energy supplies if we stop being selfish and start thinking about the collective good. Too many individuals are willing to say "not in my backyard," even if it means the group suffers. Too many groups pursue NIMBY strategies even if it means the Nation suffers.

Nobody here is trying to force Alaska to do something Alaska doesn't want to do. Alaskans want to open more of their oil reserves. But it is people in places such as Massachusetts saying no to Alaska.

No one here is trying to force Virginia to do something it doesn't want to do. Virginians want to explore for oil and gas off their coastline. It is people in places such as California and New Jersey saying no to Virginians.

Nobody here is trying to force Colorado to do something it doesn't want to do. Colorado wants to tap the shale beneath its mountains. It is people in places such as Washington, DC, saying no to Colorado.

This type of NIMBY sentiment must end. This type of selfishness must end. This type of inflicting multiyear pain waiting for demand strategies must end. We must no longer deny Americans the new supply solutions they need. We must no longer refuse American families and workers the lower gas prices they demand.

We must not only suspend shipments to the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, we must also open new oil supplies in northern Alaska, open new oil and gas supplies under our oceans, and open new oil shale supplies under our mountains, and open our ability to refine more oil. We must open the ability of U.S. workers to manufacture more hybrid batteries.

I urge my colleagues to support the Republican amendment and provision that will be coming tomorrow.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts is recognized.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I know many of my colleagues have spoken about the energy challenge and the crisis we face. I look forward to supporting Senator REID's amendment tomorrow. That amendment has been outlined in great detail during the course of the afternoon. I am in strong support of that amendment.

We are facing a national challenge, and if you look back, historically, when we have been facing a national challenge—and this time is a wartime—not to say all of this crisis is from the war, but whether it is adding to the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, or bidding up prices in other parts of the world, it is unconscionable that we have these extraordinary windfall profits that are out of the pockets of working families. And the indifference of this administration to the plight of these working families is appalling.

I applaud our leader for the legislation we will have a chance to vote on tomorrow and, hopefully, we will have a strong vote in support of it. It is inevitable that we are going to be successful because the American people are not going to tolerate the indifference and the extraordinary profiteering that is being experienced in this country at this time. I thank our leader for his efforts and his recommendations to the Senate, and I look forward to voting in support of that tomorrow.

DETAINEE BASIC MEDICAL CARE ACT OF 2008

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I am speaking in support of legislation Senator MENENDEZ and I have introduced today. It is the Detainee Basic Medical Care Act of 2008, to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to deliver timely and effective medical and mental health care to the individuals in custody.

In the past week alone, the Washington Post, "60 Minutes," and the New York Times have documented the shameful state of medical care in these detention facilities. These are people who come to the United States from all corners of the world. Some come to join their families; others come to search for jobs; others come as refugees. Some may be eligible to remain in the United States. Others may be subject to deportation. But at a minimum, they deserve basic medical care while in detention pending the outcome of their immigration proceedings, which often can take years. None of them deserves a death sentence.

Congress has an obligation to act. The bill's introduction is an important first step, and the legislation raises the medical standards and restores accountability for meeting those standards.

I look forward to working closely with Senator MENENDEZ and others in the Senate to address what is really a national disgrace.

EMPLOYER-EMPLOYEE COOPERATION ACT

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, one of fundamental importance and fundamental fairness, legislation we will be voting on tomorrow in the late morning, it is called the Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act.

This week, May 11 to May 17, is Police Week, when we honor the sacrifices of the men and women of the law enforcement community who lost their lives this year. These officers paid the ultimate price for their service to our communities. They are American heroes, as are all of the firefighters, emergency medical technicians, and other first responders across the country who protect our families and communities every day.

President Kennedy established the first Police Week in 1962. He called on all Americans to recognize the essen-

tial role public safety officers play in safeguarding our rights and freedoms. That role is even more important in today's complex and often dangerous world.

We all continue to enjoy the fundamental rights of a free people because of the sacrifices of these dedicated public servants. The least that we owe them in return is to protect their basic rights and to treat them with the dignity and respect they deserve.

Unfortunately, too many of our public safety officers do not have the same rights in the workplace that most Americans enjoy. Police officers and firefighters perform some of the most difficult and dangerous jobs in our society, but they often don't have a voice at work to talk about safety issues. They are the ones on the front lines fighting fires, preventing crimes, apprehending offenders and doing their best to keep people safe from harm. But they don't have a way to share the lessons they have learned about how to do these difficult jobs safely and effectively.

We are asking these workers to do so much for their communities, and the least we can do in return is give them a voice at the table in the life-and-death discussions that affect their families and their futures.

Across America, unions give millions of workers that kind of voice on the job. Throughout history, unions have always led the fight for a safer, fairer workplace. Unions mean decent wages and benefits. Unions mean economic security and dignity for workers, and a strong middle class for our Nation.

Public safety officers deserve the opportunity to choose for themselves whether they want the advantages that unions bring.

Providing these basic rights of first responders is essential not only for their own interests but also for the safety of our communities, and the safety of our entire Nation. In this post-9/11 era, we have asked first responders to take on a new and indispensable role in homeland security. We face new threats that require efficient and effective coordination between State and local public safety workers and federal security agencies. With these new partnerships, it becomes vital to our national interest that State and local public safety services are carried out as effectively as possible. Studies show that giving workers a voice at the table, and facilitating cooperation between public safety workers and their employers is the best way to improve the quality of public safety services and protect our homeland security.

That is why it is an honor to join Senator GREGG in sponsoring the Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act.

This important bill will ensure that all firefighters, police officers, and emergency medical personnel have the opportunity to have a voice in the policies that affect their safety and their