

that allows us to have open debate, offer amendments, and improve this bill.

I regret the fact that the Democratic leadership has decided to abandon that open process in exchange for filling the amendment tree and preventing us from having an open debate and considering amendments that actually would protect consumers from higher gas and energy prices that would be the result of this legislation.

If we get to an open process, I hope to have further debate and amendments we can consider.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California is recognized.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the time between 3 p.m. and 4 p.m. be under the control of Senator INHOFE or his designee, and that the order with respect to the farm bill be delayed until 4:10 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, I don't object. For clarification purposes, the 1 hour we have is between what hours?

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, 3 and 4. Mr. INHOFE. And the Senator from California has between 2 and 3. Between now and 2 o'clock is equally divided.

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

Mrs. BOXER. That is the first part. I further ask unanimous consent that the time until 2 p.m. be equally divided—Senator INHOFE between 12 to 1 and Senator BOXER between 1 and 2?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. INHOFE. Reserving the right to object, that wasn't quite my understanding. I thought we would have that 2-hour period equally divided but not necessarily—going back and forth would be my preference.

Mrs. BOXER. All right, I will say the time until 2 p.m. be equally divided between Senator INHOFE and myself.

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

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

CONSUMER-FIRST ENERGY ACT OF 2008—MOTION TO PROCEED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 3044, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to S. 3044, to provide energy price relief and hold oil companies and

other entities accountable for their actions with regard to high energy prices, and for other purposes.

Mr. INHOFE. I suggest the absence of a quorum and ask this time be charged to both sides.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. MCCASKILL). Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that Senator KLOBUCHAR be given 15 minutes to open the debate on our side.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senator from Minnesota is recognized for 15 minutes.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Madam President, the issue we are addressing this week, global climate change, is a challenge with so many dimensions. Some are moral, some are economic, and some are scientific. I want to spend my first few minutes today talking about the science because we cannot get the policy right unless we get the science right.

I come from a State that believes in science. Minnesota is home to the Mayo Clinic and other great medical institutions. It helped launch the green revolution in agriculture half a century ago. Today it is home to a great research university in the University of Minnesota and high-tech companies such as 3M and Medtronic.

We have brought the world everything from the pacemaker to the Post-it notes. My State believes in science. Over the last few days, we have heard a great deal of debate about the science of climate change. I believe the debate should be over. The facts are in and the science is clear.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has concluded that the evidence of global warming is now unequivocal and apparent on every continent of our planet. It is plain in erratic weather patterns, in shrinking wildlife habitat, and the melting of the permafrost.

Just last week, a new report commissioned by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and written by some of our top environmental researchers reached the same conclusion. They wrote:

There is robust scientific consensus that human-induced climate change is occurring. Observations show that climate change is impacting the nation's ecosystems in significant ways, and those alterations are very likely to accelerate in the future.

The result? Ocean levels are rising, glaciers are melting, and violent weather events are increasing—we have seen some recent ones in my State—and soon entire species will be threatened.

This is not just an environmental danger, it is also an economic danger.

First, we can see what we would predict as we see increases in temperatures in this world. The estimates are that temperatures will go up somewhere from 3 to 8 degrees in the next 100 years. To put it in perspective, it went up 1 degree in the last 100 years. We have already started seeing changes. That doesn't sound like a lot. It has only gone up 5 degrees since the height of the ice age. And the prediction from our EPA is 3 to 8 degrees.

Here we go when we look at the increasing of temperature: A 1-degree increase means increasing mortality from heat waves, floods, and droughts. This is predicted by 2020; a 2-degree increase, millions of people face flooding risk every year; a 3-degree increase, global food production decreases, and so on.

I can tell you in my State people are already seeing these changes. They have seen the economic impacts of these changes. Lake Superior is near its lowest level in the last 80 years, and that is an average. It goes up and down a little. It went up a little, fortunately, this year. But overall, we have seen decreasing levels so that overall it is at its lowest level in 80 years. That has impacted our barges, it has impacted the economy because we need more barges because they are sinking lower.

Why is that happening? The ice is melting quicker and so the water evaporates and we see lower levels in places such as Lake Superior.

We also have seen changes for our ski resorts. Overall, when we look at the trends, we have seen decreasing snow which means less money for them. Those are just some small examples of the economic costs of climate change.

We can see that the insured and uninsured costs of weather-related climate change events are going up and up, and we are all paying the price. A problem so serious demands a serious response.

This is a chart showing the weather-related economic losses and how they have increased. Look at the decades from 1960 to 1969, 1970 to 1979, 1980 to 1989, and then look at the last 10 years. These are economic losses. These are the amounts that are insured, and then this is the total of economic losses due to weather-related issues.

A problem so serious as this demands a serious response. I believe that as a Nation, we are up to it. Look at a little history. In the 1970s, after the first OPEC oil embargo caused world oil prices to quadruple, Congress passed the first CAFE standards, fuel economy standards for the Nation's cars and trucks. At first, the skeptics said Congress had overreached and the CAFE standards were unrealistic. Then business put its mind to the challenge. Auto companies developed more efficient engines and lighter automotive components, and they competed to meet customer demand for fuel-efficient cars.

Recently, the National Academy of Sciences estimated that those CAFE standards have now saved our country