

my State of Colorado, I have seen what has happened since 2004 when we passed a renewable portfolio standard, and we have gone from a point where we had almost no alternative energy, where we were not harnessing the power of the wind—we had almost zero energy being produced from the wind—to the point today where we are producing over 1,000 megawatts of power from wind. That is about the equivalent of the power generated from three coal-fired powerplants.

We were nowhere in terms of biofuels and ethanol. Yet because of policies we have passed in this Congress, today we have ethanol plants that have sprouted up across the eastern plains, giving a new potential and meaning for that part of rural America which has been so forgotten. So there are economic opportunities that also drive this agenda that we are on.

I hope as we enter into this debate tomorrow, and perhaps in the week ahead, we join together to try to set America free. When I look at how we are going to do that, in terms of our overdependence on foreign oil, it seems to me there are a number of things that we can do to get rid of that overdependence on foreign oil and, at the same time, make sure we are trying to do everything we can within our power to provide some relief to the consumers of America, to the American citizens who are suffering every day when they fill up their cars at the pump. The farmers, who are filling up their John Deere tractors, are having to pay \$1,000 every time they fill up the tractor or the combine; or the trucker, who is having to spend over \$1,000—in fact, \$5,000 for the big semitrucks—every time they have to fill their truck with diesel.

I hope we embrace this and that we can be smart about it. I would offer four concepts, in general. First, I think there is a way in which we can produce more oil. We can do it in many areas, including from the Alaska petroleum reserve. There are a number of other places where we can embrace the production of more oil for America.

Secondly, we need to stay the course in terms of pushing forward an aggressive agenda on alternative fuels. More can be done, including how we incentivize the production of biofuels.

Third is that we continue to look forward to ways of using what we have more efficiently through conservation measures that we know can stretch out our supplies in a much more significant way, where we have not done what we should have been doing in the last 30 years.

Fourth is research and the development of new technology. We now know the hybrid plug-ins and the new batteries that are being developed can help us create a national fleet that can be much more productive in terms of how we ultimately use this very scarce resource that we call petroleum and gasoline.

So I hope we can, in fact, come together in a bipartisan fashion to put

together a package that will make sense. I will make a quick comment about oil shale.

Oil shale is a very important resource for our Nation. It is a resource that we understand in Colorado has been there for a long time, since the 1920s when it was predicted that oil shale essentially was going to be the panacea to all of the oil needs of the entire world. I recognize that most of the trillion or so barrels of oil that have been calculated to exist in the reserves of oil shale are actually beneath the lands of my State, beneath the lands of the western slope, one of the most beautiful places and congressional districts in the entire United States of America.

So I believe we are already on a pathway to try to develop the technology to make sure that oil shale provides an opportunity for America in the future. That is why the research and development leases, which the Department of Interior issued under the authority we have provided to them, have been issued. That is why companies have invested to figure out whether the technology is there to be able to develop oil from the shale in place. That is why they are looking at what the requirements are going to be in terms of electricity that will be required in order to be able to heat the oil shale in place. That is why they are trying to figure out if this technology works, how much water it will take to develop this oil from the shale.

So I think we have developed a thoughtful way forward, and I am hopeful we can support the thoughtful way forward that we have already developed. A few months ago, in the Energy Committee, the Assistant Secretary testified before the committee. I had questions that I directed to him about oil shale, where he thinks it might be going. He said to me in the line of questioning that, at the end of the day, there is no way we will be producing oil from shale until, the earliest, 2015. That was his testimony, 2015.

I have a letter I have talked about before on the floor of the Senate from Chevron that also said the same thing—that it is a long way off. So I hope as we move forward on the debate about our energy future, we can be bold and aggressive and that we can provide relief as soon as we can to the citizens of America who are hurting so much, and that we can also take the long-term view in terms of what we need to do to set America free.

As we look at the potential solutions, we need to look at them in a realistic way in terms of the technology we have available to us and the limitations that we also face as Americans.

I thank the Chair for serving as the Presiding Officer and allowing me to make these comments.

I yield the floor.

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. SALAZAR. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate extend morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. WARNER. Madam President, I have advised the Senate leadership that I will be necessarily absent from the Senate for the balance of this week. Today, were I able to be present for the vote on final passage of S. 2731, the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, PEPFAR, I would have voted in favor of the bill.

GERALDINE TABOR HALL

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I was saddened to learn that Mrs. Geraldine Tabor Hall has passed away.

Gerry, as her friends called her, was the wife of Judge K.K. Hall, or K.K. as his friends called him. She was a retired registered nurse, a great West Virginian, and a very dear friend. My beloved wife Erma and I spent many an evening with the Halls. We would often stay with Gerry and Judge Hall when we were in Charleston, and always found her to be a most gracious and generous hostess.

Over the years, Gerry and Erma became particularly close. They enjoyed each other's company immensely. Maybe it was because they had so much in common.

Both Gerry and Erma were as elegant as they were "down home," and both were perfect partners to their husbands.

Both had a lot to put up with in their husbands, busy public servants whose careers required a great deal from their wives. They were both patient, deeply kind, and tremendously devoted to the State of West Virginia. Neither ever sought the limelight, but each accepted a certain amount of standing in it.

Both Gerry and Erma were supremely good listeners. Judge K.K. Hall could be quite a character. He had a grand sense of humor, and Gerry was always sure to laugh at his stories. And when I delivered a speech or performed with a good string band back home, Erma listened attentively and nodded along. Both women had heard it all time and again, but there they were, always with their warm smiles, hearty laughs, and steady applause, as if it were the first time.

Like Erma, Mrs. Hall was a most gracious host. During my long and bitter 1982 Senate election, I recall how often she would answer the door late at night to find myself and my able assistant during that campaign, Jim Huggins, standing on her porch, expecting to spend the night in the comfort and shelter of the Hall home. This often occurred without warning, and, not infrequently, very late at night. But Gerry