

The Obama administration's approach to developing domestic energy production has been to impose regulations, withdraw permits, and shut off access to lands that contain valuable oil and natural gas deposits. In addition, the EPA is currently regulating domestic energy resources for greenhouse gas emissions under the Clean Air Act. We can no longer afford organizations, such as the EPA, claiming authority to cut off our access to resources because of arbitrary rules based on unsound science. These backdoor climate regulations could increase the cost of gasoline and electricity by 50 percent. These policies work to promote our dependence on foreign oil, and they do nothing to reduce the cost for ordinary Americans.

Ten billion barrels in ANWR in Alaska means that not drilling is not an option. ANWR is roughly the size of South Carolina, but drilling in ANWR will only be about the size of McCarran Airport in the city of Las Vegas. That is about 2,000 acres out of the size of South Carolina. If I had a map here, it literally would be a dot on a huge map. That is how tiny an area we have to disturb to get this 10 billion barrels of oil out of ANWR.

We can even access ANWR during the winter months. We can drive out on ice roads that are 6 feet thick, and then in the spring, when everything starts to melt and the animals need to come out for their breeding in the springtime, we can cap the wells, take all of the equipment out, and let nature take its course in the summer months.

Additionally, at least 40 billion barrels of recoverable oil in the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska and the Chukchi and Beaufort Seas means that Alaska alone can replace crude imports from the Persian Gulf for nearly 65 years. Let me repeat that. New oil in Alaska can replace what we import from the Persian Gulf for the next 65 years. If that is not in the interest of America—our national security interests and our national economic interests—I don't know what is. I bet that is a statistic the Obama administration would rather keep hidden. As a matter of fact, they are keeping it hidden because the EPA is blocking the ability of Americans to go in and get those oil and natural gas reserves.

Also, in Louisiana, drilling for natural gas in the Haynesville Shale resulted in an estimated \$5.7 billion in new household earnings for Louisiana residents in 2009, and it created over 50,000 jobs. I mention this because going after American energy produces American jobs. I think everybody in this Chamber agrees we need American jobs today.

Now we are finding that there are more reserves located in central Louisiana and southern Mississippi, and they may contain 7 billion more barrels of natural gas. But we have also found many natural gas reserves in the rest of the country. Shale reserves in Pennsylvania, Ohio, New York, Okla-

homa, and West Virginia could provide us with literally billions more barrels of natural gas.

Yet, in the midst of this abundance, the administration has strapped down these reserves with regulations and too-long-to-comply-with permits. The solution to this situation is simple: We need to streamline the process to allow America to access its own resources without the hindrance of bureaucratic redtape. If we are allowed to fully tap into the potential of these reserves, we will be one step closer to developing affordable and environmentally safe compressed natural gas vehicles. This will not only curb our reliance on dangerous foreign oil but also create even more jobs and put us at the forefront of alternative-fuel technology. By using our own natural gas reserves, we can build more powerplants, improve our transportation needs through buses and trucks that run on natural gas, power our fleets, and improve our country's ability to manufacture steel, fabric, glass, and plastic that we need instead of outsourcing these jobs overseas, which is what has been happening.

Madam President, 28 billion barrels of deep-sea oil means that the Obama administration cannot continue to hold these reserves hostage by banning deep-sea drilling. The Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic coast areas alone hold commercial oil reserves of 28 billion barrels of oil and up to 140 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. These are huge reserves.

Despite the administration lifting its moratorium on permits late last year, only one deepwater well permit has been issued in the last 11 months—only one. We can and we must do better than this.

Yesterday, it was reported that the Obama administration will issue another handful of deepwater drilling permits in the near future. Of course, this comes at a time when the administration is appealing a ruling from a Federal court that has ordered the administration to act on the permits that have been pending and that have been virtually ignored.

Secretary Salazar, in a Senate subcommittee hearing just yesterday, said oil production in the gulf will not drop significantly as a result of the administration's delay. He said we "may see a blip." Well, this country cannot afford to see a downward blip. As a matter of fact, we need to see an upward tick. We need to see more production coming out of the Gulf of Mexico.

Recently, Senator VITTER drafted his No Cost Stimulus Plan, as he calls it—or his 3 Ds. Those 3 Ds are domestic energy, domestic jobs, and reducing the deficit. This bill aims to increase our ability to access domestic energy sources to increase our energy independence. It would use these domestic energy sources to create thousands of real, private-sector, long-term jobs in areas such as my State, where we have the potential to lead the Nation in renewable energy.

In 2009, the Obama administration canceled 77 oil and gas leases in Utah, and in 2010 it canceled another 61 oil and gas leases in Montana. This is astounding to me because now, instead of acting on American energy independence, we are trying to stifle the progress we are making. Senator VITTER's legislation would direct the Obama administration to reinstate oil and gas leases that were canceled and to open ANWR to oil production.

Senator VITTER's legislation would also establish an ANWR alternative energy trust fund so we can pay for renewable energy development with our own money instead of borrowing money from China and Saudi Arabia and others to do it. The bill also restricts the EPA from imposing regulations that cut off our access to oil and gas resources instead of utilizing them.

We have been talking about the debt on this floor and overspending. We need legislation to go after American energy. By the way, this legislation would not cost us any money. As a matter of fact, it brings in money to the U.S. Treasury because we get royalties off of American energy. That is the direction in which the Senate, the House, and the President needs to take our country—less dependence on foreign oil, more American security from an energy independence standpoint, more economic security, and more military security as well.

Republicans have solutions and we are eager to start this debate, but we need the majority to bring these bills to the floor of the Senate. The issues are too critical for us to delay. We can't afford to let gasoline continue to go up and up and up, to \$4, \$5, who knows where it is going to stop.

Unfortunately, President Clinton vetoed the bill that would have opened ANWR back in the mid-1990s. I think we were one vote short in passing the ability to open ANWR when President Bush was President. This body failed by one vote. That is unfortunate, because if we had opened ANWR, we wouldn't be in nearly as bad shape as we are in today. But it isn't just ANWR, it is many other places where we can have American energy and we need to act and we need to act now.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

#### DEBT AND NATIONAL SECURITY

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I rise to talk about our Nation's security and what the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, ADM Mike Mullen, recently said is the greatest threat to America's future. He mentioned not too long ago that the greatest threat to America's national security is our national debt, not al-Qaida or the Iranian nuclear threat or instability in the Middle East or Russian spies but our national debt.

That is a stunning statement, but I think it is backed up by the numbers. We are more than \$14 trillion in debt.

It took 220 years of American history, up to the beginning of 2009 and with 43 American Presidents, to pile up \$6.3 trillion in publicly held debt. Under the Obama administration's latest budget, we will double that in another 2 years and triple it in 10. That budget calls for a sizable annual deficit every single year for the next 10 years. The smallest budget deficit we would face would be \$607 billion in the year 2015, and then our deficits would start rising again.

That is what the White House calls a balanced budget. I would call it a joke, but it is no laughing matter. We just learned China holds even more of our debt than the Treasury had previously thought—26 percent of total U.S. debt held by foreigners. The President's budget inevitably would add to that.

That crushing debt burden we are imposing on future generations will seriously limit their ability to live the American dream. For generations in this country, parents have sacrificed so their children could have a better life, but today we are standing that tradition on its head. Excessive spending and debt threaten to make the next generation the first in our history to have a lower standard of living than the one that came before. That was not what my parents did. My father fought in World War II. He worked hard as a teacher, a coach, he drove the school bus, ran a motel in my hometown, and basically did any job he could and made whatever sacrifices he needed to make in order to keep our family fed, clothed, and sheltered. His father before him, my grandfather, traveled to this country from Norway and worked doing hard labor laying the railroad across the Plains. He started his own hardware store and ran it through the Depression and war until he couldn't work anymore. He knew what it meant to sacrifice to take care of his family.

But today, Washington seems to be saying the generations to follow us will have to sacrifice so we will not have to make the tough choices. We don't want to do the hard work of living within our means, so our children and our grandchildren will just have to get by on less. Every one of us in this Congress should be ashamed of that prospect.

But more than shame for what we are doing to future generations, we should be alarmed about what we are doing to our economy today. That skyrocketing debt means a burden of uncertainty on our businesses, small and large alike. When businesses and people are uncertain if there will be a fiscal crisis, they limit their investment. Added to the stifling amount of overregulation coming out of Congress and the administration these past 2 years, it means businesses have one more reason to worry about whether they can afford to add another person to the payroll. That means fewer jobs.

One influential study, endorsed by none other than Treasury Secretary Geithner, found that countries with very high debt burdens suffer from

lower economic growth rates. Median growth rates for countries with public debt above roughly the 90 percent of GDP threshold are about 1 percent lower than otherwise. The reasons for this are simple: Government borrowing crowds out private investment. The less productive public sector takes resources that could and would be better used by the more productive private sector.

We have already crossed the dangerous 90 percent threshold—gross debt was 93 percent of GDP at the end of last fiscal year and will top the 100 percent barrier by the end of this fiscal year. Under the President's budget, the debt will continue to grow rapidly, eventually reaching 107 percent of GDP—and that is even with the gimmicks and questionable assumptions the White House budget proposal contains, including what I believe are very unrealistic economic growth assumptions.

President Obama's own economic advisers have estimated that a 1-percent increase in GDP translates into 1 million more jobs. Many more people would have jobs today if it weren't for this crushing debt burden.

We did finally have some good news last Friday about private sector job creation. Nobody was happier than I to see that. But the fact remains that the labor force participation rate in the latest unemployment figures was unchanged at 64.2 percent, the lowest level it has been since the early 1980s. A lot of workers have been so discouraged with the lack of jobs they have simply stopped looking.

Let us not forget our recovery so far has lagged far behind past recessions. At this point after the 1981–1982 recession, the economy had already expanded to 10 percent. But the current recovery has only expanded the economy by .14 percent. That is not good enough. We all know if we don't act soon to get control of Federal spending and our soaring debt, any good news will be short-lived.

For 2 years, the Pied Pipers of big government told us they could spend their way out of financial troubles; that the money was free and it would lead to jobs, jobs, jobs. Well, they were wrong, and 2 years of their policies have left us dramatically worse off. It is simple: Too much government spending means too much government debt. That means a weaker economy and fewer jobs.

I think we are finally at the point where most people, even here in Washington, are willing to concede we need to get a handle on our spending. Even the Obama administration—the biggest spending White House in history—has finally come around to the realization that just maybe we should let the credit card cool off a bit.

There is no better time in America's history to change course regarding Federal spending. We are at a moment when we are about to get hit by a succession of three budgetary waves.

First, the end of the 2-week continuing resolution on March 18. Then we will have to address the debt limit sometime this spring. After we have dealt with those two matters, we need to take up the budget for fiscal year 2012 because the new fiscal year is only 6 months away.

None of those is a mystery. None of them snuck up on us. We have seen them all coming. We have had plenty of warning. We have no excuse for being unprepared. I am confident we can come together and solve all three of those issues. We showed we can do it with the 2-week CR, finding \$4 billion of spending that we could agree was not our most important national priority right now and could be cut. Thanks to the great work of our friend and colleague, Dr. COBURN, the GAO has confirmed there are hundreds of billions of dollars in waste and duplication we can begin to scrub out of our Federal budget.

That is our short-term situation—those three challenges. But there has also been talk of a balanced budget amendment, and I am a cosponsor of two balanced budget amendments. That is not a short-term fix. That is a long-term issue. So that is the short term and the long term.

In the midterm, we need to come up with additional solutions to get us off what I call Federal fiscal irresponsibility, budgetary brinksmanship, and deficits as far as the eye can see. We need to get back on the path of prosperity, and that path cannot be built on borrowed money and reckless spending. Getting back on the right path will require us to fix our broken budget process.

To that end, I am proud to reintroduce a bill I introduced last year that would establish commonsense reforms to improve transparency and efficiency in our budgeting process. I am proud Senators CHAMBLISS, CRAPO, INHOFE, JOHANNIS, KIRK, PORTMAN, and WICKER have joined me in cosponsoring S. 439, the Deficit Reduction and Budget Reform Act of 2011.

If we don't do something to fix this broken system and soon, we are going to keep getting hit by these budget waves, and sooner or later they are going to sink us.

My proposal has three main parts. The first is budget reforms. I propose we start by reforming pay-go rules to prevent the double-counting gimmicks that too often are used around here, particularly with regard to our trust funds. We saw that double counting occur during the health care debate last year, when hundreds of billions of dollars were doubled counted—essentially spent twice—during the health care debate.

My proposal would make the Federal budget a binding joint resolution signed into law by the President. Today, it is a nonbinding resolution and routinely gets waived.

My proposal calls for a biannual budget timeline. There is more time

for oversight and to see what is working doing a budget every other year—during the odd-numbered years—and then during the even-numbered years doing oversight. So instead of looking for ways to spend taxpayer dollars, we look for ways to save taxpayer dollars.

My proposal also calls for a legislative line-item veto. Governors have it; the President should too.

My proposal would prevent the abuse of emergency spending designations, which, again, have become all too routine and all too frequent around here, to get around spending caps.

My proposal calls for the creation of a new CLASS Act trigger, if that new entitlement program is not solvent over a 75-year timeframe.

I would also modify the Medicare cost containment trigger to have honest accounting with respect to revenues and savings in the new health care bill.

My proposal also would update the Credit Reform Act to score the purchases of debt, stock, equity, and capital using a discount rate that incorporates market risk rather than the procedure that has been used in the past which, in my view, completely understates the cost of many of these programs.

I call for a new standing joint committee of Congress for budget deficit reduction. If you can believe this, there are 26 committees or subcommittees that spend tax dollars and not one that saves tax dollars. That joint committee would be responsible for producing a bill to cut the deficit by at least 10 percent every budget cycle without raising taxes. This bill would get expedited consideration in both Chambers of Congress and use only spending reductions, not tax increases. Tax increases would be off the table. A standing committee—not just issuing one report and closing up shop—its recommendations would get an up-or-down vote in Congress.

There is a precedent for doing this. I see the Senator from West Virginia on the floor. Back in the 1940s, there was a Senator from West Virginia named Harry Byrd. As they were debating whether to raise taxes to fund World War II, he came up with an idea and said: Before we do that, we ought to look at savings we can find in our Federal budget. So he proposed a joint committee called the Joint Committee on the Reduction of Nonessential Federal Expenditures. They went about the process of scrubbing the Federal budget to see if there might be savings that could be achieved that would prevent having to raise taxes to fund the war effort. In the process of doing that, that committee achieved a great many things. It was in existence for about 30 years.

What this would do is draw on that precedent and create a joint standing committee in the Congress that would be bicameral—10 House Members, 10 Senate Members—bipartisan—10 Republicans and 10 Democrats—and would

have a statutory requirement each budget cycle for coming up with a specified amount of savings in deficit reductions through spending reductions.

What would we do in the short term? This proposal would freeze and cap spending. It would propose a 10-year spending freeze at 2008 levels adjusted for inflation. After all, nondefense discretionary spending has increased at an alarming rate since 2008—a 22-percent increase, when inflation has been roughly 2 percent. In other words, non-defense discretionary spending has grown in the last 2 years at 10 times the rate of inflation.

As I said, this is not a quick fix. No plan is going to solve our problems overnight, and I hope we do not take seriously anyone who claims to have a plan that will. But just the same, I do not think we should take seriously any plan that claims that an annual deficit of \$607 billion is the same as a balanced budget. It is not the same, and it is not good enough. The only thing that is good enough for our children and for the future prosperity of this great country is for us to get our fiscal house in order and to embrace responsible budgeting. We cannot continue to spend money we do not have. We have to learn. Like the American people have learned to live within their means, we have to learn how to tighten our belts.

I wish to close with a couple of statements.

I mentioned earlier the statement by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, ADM Mike Mullen, with regard to the greatest threat to our national security being our national debt, but I also want to quote what Secretary of State Hillary Clinton called the unexpected \$1.3 trillion U.S. deficit. She referred to it as a “message of weakness internationally,” and she went on to say:

It poses a national security threat in two ways: it undermines our capacity to act in our own interest, and it does constrain us where constraint may be undesirable.

That is Secretary of State Hillary Clinton with regard to these year-over-year massive deficits we continue to run.

Just today, we heard that PIMCO, one of the largest mutual funds in the country, has decided to dump government debt—its government debt. In that story that came out today that was discussing that particular move on their part, there was a quote from a gentleman, Jim Rogers, who is the co-founder of the Quantum Fund. He said:

U.S. Government bonds are not a safe haven. I cannot conceive of lending money to the U.S. Government for 30 years.

Think about that—the United States of America is being viewed increasingly as an unsafe investment because of this massive debt we are running and what it could mean to the future with regard to inflation and interest rates and the health of our economy and its attractiveness to people not only here at home but around the world as a place for investment.

We have a major problem. These are serious times. These are serious problems. These are serious challenges. They require serious solutions and serious leadership. I hope here in the Senate we are up to that.

As I said before, it starts on several levels. In the near term, we need to get the spending under control. We are trying to do that with the discretionary spending bill that is in front of us. We need to deal with the longer term issue. I hope we can pass a balanced budget amendment. We have had votes on that in the past here in Congress, unsuccessfully, narrowly. But we need to put in place what so many States have that require them on an annual basis to balance their budgets. Then we need to put in place budget process reforms that, in my view, will put more of a straitjacket on the Congress and force us to make more of these hard decisions.

I think, frankly, because we do this every year, this budget every year, we get very occupied with 12 appropriations bills in the budget—although last year we did not even pass a budget, nor did we pass a single appropriations bill, which is a major failure of this Congress when you are running a \$3.7 trillion enterprise called the Federal Government. But in our annual schedule, we need to provide time to do oversight, time to look at what we can be doing not to spend more money but to save money.

If we had a biennial budget process where we are spending money in odd-numbered years and doing the appropriations bills in those years, and then in the even-numbered years, when people go home to run for election, instead of looking for ways to spend money, we are actually looking for ways to save money, I think these reforms are long overdue.

I hope my colleagues will take seriously this issue of budget process reform. I know it is not glamorous subject. In fact, most people’s eyes glaze over when we talk about budget process reform. But, in my view, there is not anything we could do that would more fundamentally change the way Washington works than reforming this budget process because it drives everything else. If we do not start there, we are never going to get this issue of spending and debt under control in the long term.

I thank my colleagues who have co-sponsored this bill. I hope there will be more colleagues who will join on this bill—if not this one, something like it—that will once and for all change the way Washington works by undertaking reforms in our budget process that will lead us to greater fiscal responsibility and greater prosperity for future generations.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BLUMENTHAL). The Senator from West Virginia.

INTEROPERABLE WIRELESS  
BROADBAND NETWORK

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, tomorrow is March 11. For most of us, this date carries no particular significance. It does, however, reflect exactly 6 months before September 11. That date we do remember and will not forget. It is 6 months from the anniversary of the worst terrorist attack ever and a day that we as a nation can never forget. It is 6 months from the date we will honor the memory of those whose lives came to an end and the way we came together, at least for a short period of time, as a nation.

With that historic date approaching, I think it important that we honor the tremendous bravery of all public safety officials. I believe this is one of the most important issues facing the country, and it is one we can do something about very quickly and reduce the budget deficit by doing so.

Our police, our firefighters, our emergency medical technicians, and the countless others who fought that day to keep us safe and who work every day to protect us from harm—we have essentially forgotten about them.

The 9/11 Commission specifically said that you have to have a system that connected all law enforcement across this Nation in an interoperable wireless system. Obviously, therefore, that is a way of saying that the best and simplest way to honor them is to give them the tools they need to be successful, to be safe, and to do their job in a way that does not expose them to needless dangers. Right now, we are not doing that.

Much as in the first gulf war, when the Army and the Navy and the Marines and the Air Force could not communicate with each other because they were all on different systems of communications—and we all kind of laughed at that as being kind of pathetic. They have solved that, sort of, but we have not solved this one at all, involving every single American and every single firefighter, policeman, and law enforcement officer, deputies, sheriffs, all across America. When it comes to public safety communications, these everyday heroes do not have the networks that they could so easily have and that they so desperately need because we have not acted. It is the 10-year anniversary coming up 6 months from now—we have not acted.

Too often, first responders lack that interoperable network that is essential to providing an effective response in emergencies, all kinds of emergencies—a lot of them very desperate, not all of them catastrophic, but there is always that potential. They don't have the ability to communicate with one another. They don't have the ability to communicate with other agencies. They don't have the ability to communicate with other cities and States across State lines. They cannot do that. It is kind of pathetic in the age of the Internet. We have chosen to do nothing. Instructed by the 9/11 Com-

mission to do something a long time ago, we have done nothing. This hampers our ability to respond to a crisis, this lack of equipment. Whether that crisis is a terrorist attack or a natural disaster, it puts lives in unnecessary peril.

I believe it is time to do something about it. In the Commerce Committee, we happen to take that approach. That is why I introduced S. 28, the Public Safety Spectrum and Wireless Innovation Act. This legislation does two things. First, it sets aside the 10 megahertz of spectrum known as the D-Block. I don't know why it is called the D-Block, but it is the D-Block. Its 10 megahertz adds on to the 10 megahertz they already had, making 20, which means they could do the whole thing, completely connect with each other, every sheriff, police person, law enforcement, Federal, State, county, municipal. They would all be on one system and talk to each other from a common communications base and a common database. It is an interoperable wireless broadband network that we have to have, and it is that which we do not have. We do not have it because we have not made the effort.

Secondly, it gives the Federal Communications Commission the authority to do something very interesting: to hold incentive auctions based on the voluntary return of spectrum which is not necessarily being used by a whole variety of people who just want to hold on to it. It is better to hold on to something than to give it, but we give them an incentive on a voluntary basis—crucial word in this legislation—on a voluntary basis to return that spectrum. In turn, these auctions will provide the funding to support the construction and maintenance of the public safety network which they need and which I have been speaking about, and they free up additional spectrum for innovative commercial uses.

In short, this bill marries resources for the first responders with good commercial spectrum policy. It can keep us safe and help our economy grow. That is why the legislation has the support of absolutely every major public safety organization across this country, obviously including those of my State. That is why this bill also has strong support from all Governors and all mayors across this country. They have to deal with this. We do not; they do. That is why we now have the support of the administration.

I urge my colleagues to support the Public Safety Spectrum and Wireless Innovation Act. To those who say we cannot afford to do this now, obviously I would say we cannot afford not to. The role of intelligence reveals all kinds of things going on not only outside the country but inside the country, implying there is a target, or many of them, within this country.

But if this is not compelling enough, I think it is important for people to know this. This legislation pays for itself, plus does not cost a dime. Ac-

ording to the White House and even the industry itself, the telecommunications industry, incentive auctions will bring in revenue so much above what funding public safety requires, it will leave billions over that amount for, for example, deficit reduction. I am talking a whole lot of deficit reduction. Billions and billions. So it is a win-win-win.

I close. Let me say we have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to provide our public safety officials with the spectrum they need to communicate when tragedy strikes. We have chosen not to do that. Now there is this sort of malicious pressure of the 9/11 Commission's directive to us to do our duty as a country to the people who keep us safe.

More than that, we do need to keep this country safe, and it is not always going to be safe. We do not know when the next attack will come. So we have the incentive auctions, which are voluntary, but they will work. They can be sold for lots of money, and we will have, therefore, lots of money over and above what it costs to build this interoperable wireless broadband system across the entire country, connecting every law enforcement official to every other one.

To my colleagues I say, let's seize this moment. This is not Republican, this is not Democrat, it is simply the right thing to do. I ask people to think back to those images of 9/11, of that day, not just the 9/11 Commission report that emanated from that, why we could not stop that, but to think of the images of that day, of what those people absorbed in their lungs, the natural instinct for firefighters to come from all over the country, policemen to come from all over the country, ambulance people to come from all over the country, to New York City, a city which they do not start out loving generally out there in the hinterlands. But they knew this was a crisis, they reacted, they saved lives, they imperiled their own, and many of them lost their lives.

Let's do something historic, and let's do it together, and let's do it here in this Congress. And, certainly, let us get this all done before the 10th anniversary of September 11.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

Mr. KIRK. Mr. President. We are borrowing over \$5 billion per day.

That's \$35 billion borrowed per week to run our government, totaling over \$1.5 trillion in borrowed money just to run for a year.

Harvard's great economic historian, Niall Ferguson, noted that the decline of a country can be marked when it pays its moneylenders more than its army. His classic case comes from the French monarchy of the 1780s who failed to make interest payments on