

million acres of them are in active production. The Bureau of Land Management issued over 4,000 drilling permits last year—4,000 of them—but approximately 2,500 of them still remained unused at the end of the year.

So this argument that the requests for permits to drill are stacking up in some bureaucratic office in Washington and if they would just approve them, these oil companies would start drilling more oil and gas prices would come down, is not the truth. The Bureau of Land Management issued 4,000 drilling permits last year; 2,500 of them went unused.

I support measures proposed by my colleagues to force the oil companies to use their leases or lose them. The bill would require nonproducing leases to pay an annual fee of \$4 an acre. These leases of public lands should be actively used for domestic energy production, not kept idle as we face higher oil prices.

Let me close by saying I recently returned from a trip to China—10 days in China. China is an enigma. On the one hand, they are the most significant economic partner of the United States. They are our largest creditor. They loan us more money than any other country. On the other hand, they are our most significant economic competitor. Partner and competitor, that is the relationship.

When you go to China, you are struck by the fact that their air pollution is horrible. In every city we visited, I cannot imagine how people live there full time and do not develop serious health problems because of the terrible pollution they have in their country. But despite the pollution, they are creating an expanding economy. They are building right and left. What are they focusing on as the No. 1 area where China wants to dominate the world? Clean energy. In every direction: solar panels and wind turbines and new research on clean energy.

I wish I could say the same for the United States. But I am afraid I cannot. We do not have an energy policy. We are still dependent on traditional fuels. We still have to recognize those fuels create environmental issues we have to face, and, unfortunately, we are not. We are not acknowledging the fact that if we are not careful, China is going to dominate in the world when it comes to clean energy throughout the course of this century.

We need an energy policy in this country, not just to deal with the terrible gas prices we are facing today but to deal with a future which makes us less dependent on foreign oil.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

HONORING CARL PIKE

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I rise today to once again touch on a subject that is important to me. I know it is very important to the Presiding Officer because the Commonwealth of Virginia and the great State of Maryland have a large number of Federal employees. As the Presiding Officer knows, this week we celebrate Public Service Recognition Week to honor public servants at all levels of government for their admirable patriotism and contributions to our country.

I wish to begin by commending our military intelligence professionals for the coordinated and painstaking work that was responsible for tracking down Osama bin Laden. There are a number of nameless, faceless Federal workers who have been investigating his whereabouts for more than a decade. I was proud to be in this Chamber with the Presiding Officer and colleagues from both sides of the aisle when, on Tuesday afternoon, this body recognized their work.

Our military and intelligence professionals are not the only ones on the front lines of keeping our country safe. Today, I rise to honor a resident of Reston, VA, Carl Pike, the Assistant Special Agent in Charge of the Special Operations Division at the Drug Enforcement Administration, DEA. This is a photo of Carl and his whole team.

We have all seen reports in recent years detailing the violent and inhumane acts of the Mexican drug cartels that terrorize cities and control a significant percentage of the narcotics flowing into the United States. Mr. Pike is the head of a complex multi-agency task force set up to catch many of these violent criminals and disrupt the flow of drugs. Last year, he and his team led the largest strike ever against La Familia, one of the most ruthless Mexican drug cartels and a major trafficker of methamphetamine in the United States. The strike, dubbed "Project Coronado," was an operation that spanned 20 States, 50 cities, 2 countries, and multiple Federal agencies. Attorney General Eric Holder said the "unprecedented, coordinated U.S. law enforcement action" was a "significant blow to La Familia's supply chain of illegal drugs, weapons and cash flowing between Mexico and the United States."

The strike would not have been possible without Mr. Pike, as so many of his colleagues attest. One DEA Special Assistant Agent in Charge said:

He oversaw the broad interests of the law enforcement community, displayed phenomenal negotiating and planning skills, and facilitated collaboration between agencies and international partners that often had competing interests.

In the end, Project Coronado led to the arrest of 1,200 associates of La Familia and the seizure of 1½ tons of methamphetamine, \$32 million in cash, and 400 weapons. It truly was a significant achievement.

Carl Pike and his team should be recognized for removing dangerous drugs

and criminals off our streets—something for which we can all be grateful.

I hope my colleagues will join me in honoring Mr. Pike and his team as well as all those at the DEA for their excellence and service to our Nation.

I was also proud to be part of a group earlier today recognizing a number of Federal employees—nine from the Commonwealth of Virginia and many from the State of Maryland—who were part of a national competition that recognizes quality work of government workers.

As we see this week in broad display those military intelligence professionals in this most dramatic action against Osama bin Laden, as we see Mr. Pike and his team taking on drug cartels, and as we see the hundreds of thousands of other Federal workers who day-in and day-out, often without recognition, do the job of keeping our government operating and in many ways keeping our country safe, I hope my colleagues will join in saluting those efforts and recognize that this week, Public Service Recognition Week, is to honor all of our public servants.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, do I understand correctly that we are continuing in morning business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Yes.

RUSSIAN RULE OF LAW

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, on several occasions I have risen to address my colleagues on the topic of Russia and the continuing sad state of the rule of law in the Russian Federation. Today, I rise once again to address the latest information regarding the absence of a rule-of-law framework in Russia's approach to businesses and investors. Specifically, this situation negatively impacts the United States and the entire international community.

There have been a number of poor decisions around the world related to the Yukos Oil issue that highlight Russia's hostility toward investment and business. As my colleagues may be aware, GML, the majority shareholder of the former Yukos Oil, previously headed by businessman and now political prisoner Mikhail Horders, has a \$100 billion arbitration claim against the Russian Federation to obtain compensation for the Yukos assets which were summarily taken between 2003 and 2005.

Several recent developments demonstrate yet again that international courts do not recognize Russia's 2003 expropriation of Yukos Oil Company as legitimate and that former stakeholders of the company may pursue compensation for their assets that were seized improperly and, in essence, nationalized by the Russian State.

Court victories handed to shareholders involved in the dispute indicate that the international legal system