

Relying on its kindness in this as in other things, and actuated by that fervent love towards it which is so natural to a man who views in it the native soil of himself and his progenitors for several generations, I anticipate with pleasing expectation that retreat, in which I promise myself to realize without alloy the sweet enjoyment of partaking in the midst of my fellow citizens the benign influence of good laws under a free government—the ever favorite object of my heart, and the happy reward, as I trust, of our mutual cares, labors and dangers.

GEO. WASHINGTON.

UNITED STATES,
17th September, 1796.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair thanks the Senator from Virginia.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be dispensed with.

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

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I congratulate my colleague from Virginia on the reading of George Washington's Address. I listened carefully. I think we all share the thought and vision expressed in that address when it was first made. Each year it has been repeated, and being part of that tradition adds to the stature of our new Senator from the State of Virginia. I am pleased to have listened attentively to his reading.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, will the Senator yield?

Mr. MURKOWSKI. I am happy to yield.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I wish to associate myself with the remarks of the distinguished junior Senator from the State of Alaska concerning the meaning of the address and its eternal and continuing truths. We would all do well to listen annually to the reading of this address. I thank the distinguished junior Senator from Virginia for his eloquence and for his reading of the message this morning.

I am only sorry more Senators have not attended this important occasion. That is nothing new. I have, I think, attended the reading of the Farewell Address of our first and foremost and greatest President, George Washington, for many years. I try always to attend if I am in the city, and it goes without saying that I am generally here at this time.

I always get something new out of listening to this address. I only hope in the future our colleagues and our joint leadership will attempt to attend and encourage the attendance of all Senators to the reading of this address.

I close by thanking my colleague, Mr. ALLEN, again. I thank the Senator from Alaska.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, let me also comment on the statement of the senior Senator from West Virginia,

who clearly leads the way of all Senators as the historian of this body.

Reminding us that each time he has learned something new and takes a new appreciation of that with him is something we can all reflect on in our own lives so we, through our own contribution, can make things just a little bit better for someone somewhere—even our children and grandchildren.

Mr. BYRD. I thank my friend.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. NELSON of Nebraska). Under the previous order, there will now be a period for the transaction of morning business not to extend beyond the hour of 4 p.m. Under the previous order, the time until 2:30 p.m. shall be under the control of the Senator from Alaska, Mr. MURKOWSKI. The Senator is recognized.

NATIONAL ENERGY SECURITY

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I am going to be introducing today legislation which has been forthcoming for some time. The legislation is the specific energy bill that has been worked on by a number of my colleagues and professional staff on the Energy and Natural Resources Committee. As a consequence, what we have here is a comprehensive bill that will be introduced twice because one version will go to the Energy and Natural Resources Committee and that will be titles 1-8; and another version with the entire text, titles 1-9, will be referred to the Finance Committee.

Mr. President, this legislation is sponsored by myself and Senator BREAUX. It is bipartisan legislation. Included as original cosponsors are Senator LOTT, Senator VOINOVICH, Senator DOMENICI, Senator CRAIG, Senator CAMPBELL, Senator THOMAS, Senator SHELBY, Senator BURNS, and Senator HAGEL.

The purpose of the bill specifically is to protect the energy security of the United States and to decrease America's dependence on foreign oil sources to 50 percent by the year 2001 by enhancing the use of renewable energy resources, conserving energy resources, improving energy efficiency, increasing domestic energy supplies, improving environmental air quality by the reduction of emissions from air pollutants and greenhouse gases, and decreasing the effects of increases in energy prices on the American consumers as well.

I would like to talk at some length this afternoon on what comprises this particular legislation. I am going to be referring specifically to the items in the comprehensive energy bill which is the National Energy Security Act of 2001.

I think it is fair to say we all have taken energy for granted for far too long. Yet now, with a weakening economy, increasing energy costs, and regional shortages, we are much more aware of the reality that we have really not had a real energy policy for

most of the last decade—something we just took for granted—and suddenly we are seeing the spirals, we are seeing the shortages, and we are becoming concerned.

I think it is also fair in most cases to understand that energy is one of those nebulous things that is really so important that it is often overlooked. It grows our food, heats and cools our homes, and powers our electronic world. It is really what keeps us alive.

We have fought over energy. We just came back from the Persian Gulf war. Wars have been fought over energy. Billions of dollars are spent just to ensure that we have access to energy in various forms.

Our continued economic prosperity depends on a clean, secure, and affordable energy supply. It is for this reason that I rise today to introduce the National Energy Security Act of 2001.

What we put before the Senate today is a balanced portfolio of energy options, and to begin debate on these important issues.

Let me advise the President that by no means is this intended to be the package necessarily of comprehensive energy legislation that will ultimately come out of the committees of jurisdiction—the Energy and Natural Resources Committee and the Finance Committee—and onto the floor.

The purpose of the legislation is so that we can begin the debate on the important issues to determine just what kind of energy policy we should have in this country.

I should also mention that this particular legislation as proposed does not have the input of the new administration. They have only been in office for about 5 weeks. It is my understanding that an energy task force has been put together, by the order of the President, with the responsibility given to Vice President CHENEY. They anticipate having an energy policy developed within 45 or 60 days. Undoubtedly, the input from the administration is going to be a necessary additive to the ultimate debate, and legislation will be forthcoming.

During the last decade, the United States has lost control of its energy future. At no time in our history have we relied upon others for more of our energy supplies while producing a smaller percentage of the energy we consume.

Ten years ago, the U.S. imported less than half of the oil it consumed; today, that has increased to nearly 60 percent. Meanwhile, other types of energy have been made more difficult to produce, more difficult to deliver, and more difficult to use.

The rapid growth of the Internet and the "dot-com" economy during the 1990s led to significant increase in demand for energy. Yet, despite this increase in demand, domestic production of all forms of energy has remained flat over the last four years.