Last year, the Head Start 2010 National Advisory Panel held fifteen national hearings and open forums. The panel found:

. . . that despite increases resulting from Federal quality set-aside funding, relatively low salaries and poor or non-existent benefits make it difficult to attract and retain qualified staff over the long term. . . . the quality of the program is tied directly to the quality of the staff.

Head Start is one of the most important federal programs because it has the potential to reach children early in their formative years when their cognitive skills are just developing. Many of our Nation's youngsters, however, enter elementary school without the basic skills necessary to succeed. Often these children lag behind their peers throughout their academic career.

I believe we must continue to improve the cognitive learning aspects of the Head Start program so that children leave the program able to count to ten, to recognize sizes and colors, and to recite the alphabet. To ensure cognitive learning, we must continue to raise the standards for Head Start teachers. Offering Head Start teachers similar compensation for their educational achievements and expenses afforded to other teachers is one step to encouraging college graduates to become Head Start teachers.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak up to 10 minutes each.

Mr. REID. Reserving the right to object, Mr. President, it is my understanding, because there are people waiting to find out what the final decision is, that there will be no more votes tonight. That is my understanding; we are trying to finish.

Mr. JEFFORDS. That is my understanding.

Mr. REID. I also ask if there is going to be any more legislative business tonight.

Mr. JEFFORDS. Other than what is cleared between the two leaders, there will be no other business.

Mr. REID. I withdraw my objection.

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

The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I understand we may speak as in morning business for a few minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Up to 10 minutes.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak for about 4 minutes.

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

ENERGY

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I rise on a small point, but it is representative of some of the difficulties we are having in trying to keep some focus on reality associated with the administration's anticipated energy package.

I am sure many Members saw the Washington Post today, Tuesday, May 15. On the front page there was a color picture of the Phillips Petroleum Company facility at Alpine which depicts very vividly the realization that technology indeed can make a very small footprint in the Arctic areas of Alaska, my State.

The picture represents a fair evaluation of this development. It was taken in the summertime, that brief 2½ months or so when the area is not covered with ice and snow. The viewer can see the river, the lakes. But to grasp the significance of it, one has to recognize that this is a major oil field in itself. Yet it takes less acreage than the District of Columbia.

That footprint is concentrated in the area that is known as Alpine. For the most part, one derrick has drilled the wells there. These are directional drills that go out for many miles recovering the oil. This particular facility is producing about 88,000 barrels a day.

However, there is another picture. This is the point I want to bring home to the Members. In an effort to try to draw a balance, if you will, between development and the wildlife in the area, the Washington Post portrays a picture of three little bears, and it is entitled ''A polar bear with her cubs rests in Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.''

The reality is that this picture was not taken in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. It was taken in another area of Alaska far, far away.

It isn't that we don't have polar bears in Alaska. We are all concerned about the beauty and the majesty of this beast, but we have done a lot to encourage the polar bear by safeguarding it from any trophy hunting. In Alaska, you cannot take a polar bear for a trophy. You cannot take a polar bear if you are a non-Native, but you can go to Canada and you can go to Russia.

We have and will provide for the RECORD the statement from the photographer of exactly where this picture was taken. But it is not in ANWR, and the photographer is prepared to give a statement in that regard. Here again we have another mischaracterization, the implication that ANWR is filled with polar bears and that if we open up this fragile area, somehow we are going to disturb the polar bears. That is not accurate.

The Washington Post should know better. They should check their sources. They should recognize that polar bears for the most part live out on the ice. Why do they live on the ice? Because that is where there is something to eat. They live on the ice, and they stalk the seal. As a consequence, they don't come into the Arctic National Wildlife area in any abundance.

They do come in from time to time. But there is little food for them, and during the months where the ice is continually moving, they simply stay out on the ice where they can have the availability of food. It is noted that there are very few that den on the shores adjacent to ANWR. So, again, I encourage my colleagues to recognize, as I am sure many people who see in the Washington Post today those warm and cuddly polar bears, that they are being misled in this particular photo because this photo was not taken in ANWR.

I also encourage my colleagues to recognize that the administration is going to come out with an energy task force report. While I have not had briefings to amount to any significant detail, I think it is important for the American people, and my colleagues particularly, to know that it addresses positive corrections in the imbalance we have in America's energy crisis.

We do have a crisis. One need only look at California to recognize that Californians are going to be paying an extraordinarily increased amount for energy. Electricity is $60 billion to $70 billion. Last year, it was in the area of $28 billion. The year before, it was $9 billion. They have an energy crisis. We haven't built a new coal-fired plant in this country since 1995. Yet close to 51 percent of our energy comes from coal. We haven't built a new nuclear plant in this country for more than 10 years. Yet we know the value of nuclear from the standpoint of what it does to air quality. There are no emissions. There are other tradeoffs.

We also know we are now 56- to 57-percent dependent on imported oil, and the forecasts are that the world will be increasing its consumption of oil for one reason—for transportation—by nearly a third in the next 10 years or so.

We have seen natural gas and our increasing dependence on natural gas because it is one of the few areas where you can get a permit to put in facilities. Yet natural gas prices have increased dramatically from $2.16 per thousand cubic feet 18 months ago to $4, $5, $6, $7 to $8. We have had a coming together and that coming together also involves distribution. We have had the realization in the hearing that we had today before the Energy Committee, which I chair, that there are severe constrictions on transmitting electric energy.

In our bill that we introduced, we left out eminent domain for electric transmission lines purposely because we felt the States could meet that obligation as they saw fit. Now some suggest that States don't have the commitment internally to reach a decision and are going to need Federal eminent domain. Maybe that is the case. It is like the perfect storm; everything is coming together at once. No new coal, no nuclear, dependence on imported oil, higher costs for natural gas, no relief on transmission. Now they are saying we have to do something about it immediately.