

will provide the authorizations necessary to unlock a potentially huge supply of domestic natural gas, enough gas to supply our Nation for generations.

However, before I introduce this legislation, I would first like to thank my good friend and colleague, Senator AKAKA, for his dedication to helping address our Nation's energy crisis through legislation that should dramatically increase our domestic supply of environmentally friendly, clean burning natural gas. Without Senator AKAKA's hard work and focus on this issue we would not be introducing this legislation today.

Mr. President, our Nation is facing an energy crisis. Oil and natural gas prices are at historic or near historic high levels. Oil prices are over \$50 a barrel. Natural gas prices are over \$7.00 a MMBtu. Indeed, United States natural gas prices have increased by almost 350 percent since 1998 and are currently the highest in the world. Despite this huge increase in cost, domestic natural gas production has declined by almost 5 percent and Canadian imports have declined by almost 25 percent from 2001 to 2004. Estimates are that during the past 5 years United States natural gas consumers have paid nearly \$200 billion more for natural gas than they paid in the preceding 5 years.

These extraordinarily high natural gas prices are having a profound impact on every segment of our economy. Chairman Greenspan identified our current natural gas price and supply situation as a crisis that could have a devastating impact on the United States economy. In fact, estimates are that the natural gas crisis has significantly contributed to the loss of 2.5 million United States manufacturing jobs. Indeed, the ongoing "demand destruction" caused by current gas prices with its devastating impact on United States manufacturing will only continue unless we address the current natural gas supply shortage and high prices.

Today, the United States produces about 22 trillion cubic feet of natural gas each year. By 2025, the Energy Information Administration estimates that United States natural gas consumption will reach 31 trillion cubic feet. That's an increase of more than 40 percent. Much of the new electric generation that will come on line during the next two decades will require natural gas according to a study by the American Gas Foundation. Indeed, clean burning natural gas remains the premium fossil fuel for electric power generation.

The EIA estimates that by 2025 the United States will produce only 21.8 trillion cubic feet of natural gas meeting just 70 percent of the Nation's expected demand. Thus, absent securing a new domestic supply of gas, the United States will have to import 30 percent of its natural gas supply. We have already gone down this path with our petroleum supplies. We have witnessed the

unacceptable national security, balance of payments and general economic consequences of this level of reliance on foreign sources for our nation's critical supply of oil. We must not repeat this reality with natural gas.

This is why I am proud to introduce the Methane Hydrate Research and Development Reauthorization Act of 2005. As stated in the findings section of the legislation, the National Research Council has estimated the total United States methane hydrate resource base to be on the order of 200,000 trillion cubic feet. Alaska alone is thought to have potential hydrate resources of 32,000 trillion cubic feet. Indeed, a report issued by the National Commission on Energy Policy states that the United States may be endowed with over one-fourth of the methane hydrate deposits in the world. This is an immense supply of secure, domestic energy that could supply our country for many, many years.

The Methane Hydrate Reauthorization Act of 2005 builds upon the success of the original Methane Hydrate Research and Development Act of 2000. The new act incorporates certain changes to the 2000 legislation suggested by the National Research Council of the National Academies and the Department of Energy. The 2000 act established an advisory panel to advise the Secretary of Energy on potential applications of methane hydrate and to assist in developing recommendations and priorities for methane hydrate research and development programs. The new act strengthens the role of the advisory panel to ensure that the research funds are put to their most effective use. The 2005 act also increases the use of a scientific peer review process in determining which projects will be funded. Further, the new legislation directs the funding of fellowships and graduate education and training programs to establish a solid, scientific foundation of expertise in the United States on methane hydrates. Finally, the 2005 act authorizes increased funding for the methane hydrate program. The increased funding is critical in order to allow for the transition from a largely research oriented program to one that will foster the beginning of the commercialization of our Nation's methane hydrate resources.

Again, I thank Senator AKAKA and his staff for their hard work and commitment to this legislation that is so important to our nation's future.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 95—RELATING TO THE DEATH OF THE HOLY FATHER, POPE JOHN PAUL II

Mr. FRIST (for himself, Mr. REID, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. SANTORUM, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. AKAKA, Mr. ALEXANDER, Mr. ALLARD, Mr.

ALLEN, Mr. BAUCUS, Mr. BAYH, Mr. BENNETT, Mr. BIDEN, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. BOND, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BROWNBACK, Mr. BUNNING, Mr. BURNS, Mr. BURR, Mr. BYRD, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. CARPER, Mr. CHAFEE, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mrs. CLINTON, Mr. COBURN, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. COLEMAN, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. CONRAD, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. CORZINE, Mr. CRAIG, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. DAYTON, Mr. DEMINT, Mr. DEWINE, Mr. DODD, Mrs. DOLE, Mr. DOMENICI, Mr. DORGAN, Mr. ENSIGN, Mr. ENZI, Mr. FEINGOLD, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. GREGG, Mr. HAGEL, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. HATCH, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. INOUE, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. JEFFORDS, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. KERRY, Mr. KOHL, Mr. KYL, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mrs. LINCOLN, Mr. LOTT, Mr. LUGAR, Mr. MARTINEZ, Mr. MCCAIN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. NELSON of Florida, Mr. NELSON of Nebraska, Mr. OBAMA, Mr. PRYOR, Mr. REED, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, Mr. SALAZAR, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. SMITH, Ms. SNOWE, Mr. SPECTER, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. STEVENS, Mr. SUNUNU, Mr. TALENT, Mr. THOMAS, Mr. THUNE, Mr. VITTER, Mr. VOINOVICH, Mr. WARNER, and Mr. WYDEN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 95

Whereas Pope John Paul II was one of the greatest spiritual leaders and moral teachers of the Modern Era; and

Whereas he set an extraordinary example of personal integrity and courage, not only for his fellow Catholics but for people of every religious and philosophical viewpoint; and

Whereas throughout the course of his pontificate he campaigned tirelessly for human rights and human dignity throughout the world; and

Whereas he practiced and inspired resistance to the great totalitarian systems and tyrannies that rose and, with his help, fell in the 20th Century; and

Whereas he fostered harmony between Catholics and Eastern Orthodox and Protestant Christians, reached out in friendship to Jews, Muslims and members of other faiths, and warmly promoted interfaith understanding and cooperation; and

Whereas he dedicated himself to the defense of the weakest and most vulnerable members of the human family; and

Whereas on his visits to our country he has called all Americans to be true and faithful to the great principles of liberty and justice inscribed in our Declaration of Independence and Constitution; and

Whereas his selfless service to God and man has been an inspiration to Americans and men and women of goodwill across the globe; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Senate of the United States joins the world in mourning his death, and pays tribute to him by pledging to be ever faithful to our national calling to be "one Nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all," and to help our neighbors in immeasurable ways.