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Senate

The Senate met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable DANIEL K. AKAKA, a Senator from the State of Hawaii.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal and dependable Creator of the Universe, we acknowledge You as the giver of every good and perfect gift. You are our solid rock. You arm us with strength. Thank You for the seasons and climates, for sowing and reaping, for color and fragrance. Thank You for the time of harvest when our labors and dreams are rewarded.

Today, bless our lawmakers. Illumine their lives to keep them on the right paths. May the creative power of Your word produce in them a stronger faith and an indomitable hope. Keep them from slipping. Fill them with courage as You show them Your unflinching love. Give them an attitude of openness to receive the fullness of Your grace and truth.

We pray in Your precious Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable DANIEL K. AKAKA led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read a communication to the Senate.

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, June 18, 2007.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable DANIEL K. AKAKA, a Senator from the State of Hawaii, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. AKAKA thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Today the Senate will be in a period of morning business until 3:30 p.m. The time will be equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees. Once morning business has closed, the Senate will resume consideration of the energy legislation. There are no rollcall votes today. There are a number of amendments pending. The managers are going to work on trying to dispose of some of those, and maybe there will be other amendments that will be offered today and debated today.

ENERGY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, it is summertime and school is out and people are planning their vacations. Most all the vacations are ones where people drive. They, of course, go visit relatives, they go to the beaches and the mountains where it is cool, barbecuing with friends, but driving is part of America. If you have traveled in Nevada, which millions of people do by automobile every year, going through Nevada and coming to places such as Las Vegas, Reno, and Lake Tahoe, you find the price of gas is very high. But it is that way all over the country, not just Nevada. The record-high price is no accident. It is a result of America's addiction to oil.

I say again, as I have said many times before, today in America we are going to use 21 million barrels of oil; 65 percent of that oil we will import. We will do it from unstable countries and regions. We have been told with no uncertainty by scientists that we have only 10 to 15 years to do something to dramatically reduce the elements of pollution that cause global warming.

This week we are going to continue our debate on energy legislation. This is a bill on which every Senator should agree, but they do not. This is a bill that comes out of the Energy Committee on a bipartisan basis, a bill that comes out of the Environment and Public Works Committee on a bipartisan basis, a bill that comes out of the Commerce Committee on a bipartisan basis. They were all put together and this is what is before us, a bipartisan energy bill.

The bill addresses both sides of the energy crisis, consumption and supply. That is what it is all about. On the consumption side, this bill raises fuel economy standards for cars and trucks and raises efficiency standards for light, heat, and water.

We now know we have to produce vehicles that get 27 miles to the gallon. For people, including our automobile manufacturers, to say: We can't do it, we can't simply in a decade produce vehicles that will be 35-miles-per-gallon efficient—our country is one of ingenuity, of inventing things—certainly we can do that. We have to do that.

On the supply side, our legislation invests in renewable fuels that can be produced right here in America. It would sure be good for our country if we could include an amendment that would diversify power generation to include at least 15 percent of the energy from renewable sources. This will save consumers tens of billions of dollars every year, cut our oil consumption by more than 4 million barrels a day, reduce our dependence on oil and foreign energy sources, and take a giant step

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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forward in the fight against global warming.

Raising CAFE standards and implementing a renewable portfolio standard are two of the most crucial parts of this legislation. I urge my colleagues to stand on the side of the American people by supporting this legislation: CAFE that is in the bill, and the renewable portfolio standard that was introduced by Senator BINGAMAN.

There are some who say we need to produce more oil. Of course we do. But keep in mind, out of 100 percent of the oil in the world, America controls less than 3 percent of it. This is the world; here we are. We have that much of the oil. We can't produce our way out of the problems we have. But it appears to me that many are saying more of the same: drill, drill, drill, which is similar to what the administration is saying about the war in Iraq, more of the same. That will not work. Drill, drill, drill will not work either.

It is time for our country to stop stonewalling and start supporting the kind of innovation that is already happening across America with the renewable portfolio standard. In the State of Nevada, there is a renewable portfolio standard. American ingenuity is looking at things, like in California where one professor is working on a new technology that can manufacture fuel out of simple plant material in any industrial park in America. I have eminent scientists who visit with me on this issue. There is wide-ranging support. I had come to my office one day last week—I was surprised—Paul Newman, the famous actor. He came to talk about this plant material. He is a person who is devoted to the environment. He is using his celebrity status to come and tell Members of Congress to do something about it.

So we have eminent scientists, we have people of celebrity status such as Paul Newman, and the rest of Americans who want us to do something about it.

In Pennsylvania, Amish farmers are charging their buggy batteries with solar power. In the State of Nevada, the Southern Nevada Water Authority, which is Las Vegas, is using solar energy at water pumping stations to move water uphill, something that in the past would have required tremendous nonrenewable power. There are things that can be done.

I was listening to public radio this morning. They are having a drought in Australia—I believe it was Sidney. I am not sure what the name of the city was. But they have had a lot of new people come and their water supply has dropped by 21 percent, so they are desalinizing water from the ocean. But the people said: We are not going to do that by burning fossil fuel. So what they have done is they have wind farms 60 miles away—I think that is how far it is; quite a ways away—wind farms, producing all the energy which now supplies 20 percent of the water for that city in Australia which needs millions of gallons of water every day.

It can be done. We need to lessen our dependence on fossil fuel. That kind of innovation is exactly what America does best, and that is what the Government should be investing in, things like I just talked about. The energy crisis will not be solved overnight, but this bill is a crucial first step. So let's take that first step. It is a bipartisan piece of legislation; not divided by our political parties but united, I hope, by our commitment to a cleaner, safer energy future. We are going to finish this bill sometime this week unless something goes haywire.

Then, when we finish that, we are going to move on to everyone's favorite subject, immigration.

I mentioned this last Friday, and I say it again: People who have weekend schedules should understand if they are going to be gone from the Senate, they are likely going to miss votes. We cannot get to immigration until Thursday at the earliest. In an effort to finish by our Fourth of July recess, we have to take up the bill Thursday, probably late in the day, which will mean votes over the weekend. It is always possible by unanimous consent that may not be necessary, but I am telling everybody the odds are tremendous that we will be voting this weekend. And on Monday there will be votes and there will be votes before 5:30. It is our last weekend before the Fourth of July recess. We have work to do. I hope we don't run into the Fourth of July recess, but we may have to if we can't get things done.

I am sorry to be the bearer of bad news regarding the schedule, but we have obligations to complete energy and immigration.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WEBB). Under the previous order, there will now be a period of morning business until 3:30 p.m. with Senators permitted to speak therein up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled by the two leaders or their designees.

The majority leader is recognized.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum and ask the time be charged equally against both the majority and minority time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

ENERGY

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I am in the Chamber to speak to some amendments to the Energy bill which the Senate debated last week and is continuing to debate this week.

The first is an amendment I offered last week, along with Senator SNOWE, where we are joined by many Senators, including Senator BINGAMAN, who is managing the bill on the majority side, as well as Senator COLLINS and Senator COLEMAN, as well as Senators KERRY, BOXER, and CARPER.

There are a number of people supporting this amendment throughout the Senate because they understand if we are going to discuss any kind of climate change policy going forward, we at least need to have accurate information. Other countries are doing this quite successfully.

The idea is to have one gathering place for information, and that would be our EPA. The amendment gives them latitude to set this up as they would like, but the idea is to have one place for a carbon registry or, to make it easier, a carbon counter. I figure if Weight Watchers can have a calorie counter, we can have a carbon counter.

Now, what is interesting about this is the type of business support we have seen for action in this area. Obviously, we have seen action across our States—in places such as my State of Minnesota, in places such as California and Arizona and New Jersey—all over this country.

I have often said the States have taken the lead, that they have been more than the laboratories of democracy, they have been the aggressors. One of our national magazines this week has a picture of Governor Schwarzenegger and Mayor Bloomberg on the front cover, and it says: "Who Needs Washington?" Because they are moving so quickly? Well, that cover says it all.

We need to be relevant. We need to lead the national energy policy. We need to at least gather the information we need to make good decisions about climate change policy going forward.

Now, as for the businesses, in January, it made quite a big splash when some American businesses came together to form the U.S. Climate Action Partnership. They actually urged Congress to fast track a greenhouse gas inventory and registry. They asked it be done by the end of this year.

With my short time in the Senate, I realize you cannot wait until September or December to get this idea passed. If you are actually going to get it done by the end of the year, you need to get it passed now.

Now, let me go through some of the companies that are part of this U.S. CAP group that is advocating for change, that is acknowledging climate change is an issue, and is advocating for a national registry. They include Alcoa; American Industry Group, or AIG; Boston Scientific Corporation; BP America; Caterpillar; ConocoPhillips;