

threat posed by terrorists in other areas, such as Afghanistan, as well as around the globe.

I believe that General Petraeus has been an unapologetic supporter of this misguided war in Iraq, continually toeing the administration's party line and failing to acknowledge many of the grave failings that have occurred. The military alone will not be able to stabilize Iraq, we must understand the political and diplomatic situation at hand, and I do not believe that under General Petraeus' leadership, the necessary reconciliation to allow the Iraqi Government to take control has occurred. General Petraeus has shown no willingness to take us in this new direction, and it is for this reason that cannot support his nomination.

With respect to Lieutenant General Odierno, I believe that his past command of the 4th Infantry Division demonstrated what I consider to be serious flaws in judgment. General Odierno refused to characterize the insurgency that began after the fall of the Saddam Hussein regime as anything that was serious and worthy of U.S. strategy shift. As we know, the failure to correctly assess the nature of the insurgency helped fuel years of violence in Iraq.

We are long overdue for a new course in Iraq. The tragically overwhelming costs of this war in both lives and resources have distracted us from the initial task of fighting al-Qaida. It is time that we have leaders who will be able to independently assess our military mission in Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Middle East rather than unquestionably support the failed policies of this administration.

---

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume legislative session.

---

#### AMERICAN HOUSING RESCUE AND FORECLOSURE PREVENTION ACT OF 2008—Continued

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 Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. KLOBUCHAR). Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### REQUEST TO BE EXCUSED

Mr. STEVENS. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that I be excused from the call of the Senate until the first vote that occurs on July 14.

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

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 Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

#### ENERGY

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, I want to take a moment to speak about one of the most important issues facing our country right now, and that is the energy crisis, in terms of the high cost of energy and the fact that people will be suffering very significantly this coming winter—in fact, this summer—if we do not address it.

In that regard, on June 24, I introduced S. 3186, the Warm in Winter and Cool in Summer Act, to provide immediate relief to millions of senior citizens, families with children, and the disabled, who are struggling to pay their home energy bills. Specifically, this bill would nearly double the funding for the highly successful Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program, commonly called LIHEAP, in fiscal year 2008, taking LIHEAP from \$2.57 billion to \$5.1 billion, a total increase of over \$2.5 billion.

I thank Majority Leader REID for completing the rule XIV process for this important piece of legislation and placing it directly on the Senate calendar. My understanding is that we will have this bill on the floor before we recess for the August vacation. It is important we do that, and I thank Senator HARRY REID very much for allowing us to move forward in that direction.

I also thank the 26 Senators who are cosponsors of this tripartisan legislation. This bill absolutely is a tripartisan piece of legislation. At this point, we have 18 Democrats on board, we have 8 Republicans on board, and I expect more will be coming on in the coming days and weeks. I thank Senators OBAMA, COLEMAN, LEAHY, SMITH, DURBIN, SNOWE, MURRAY, SUNUNU, LANDRIEU, COLLINS, MURKOWSKI, CLINTON, LUGAR, CANTWELL, GREGG, KERRY, CARDIN, KENNEDY, SCHUMER, BROWN, KLOBUCHAR, MENENDEZ, CASEY, BINGAMAN, STABENOW, and LAUTENBERG for their support.

This legislation not only has strong bipartisan support here in the Senate, it is also moving in the House, and it also has been endorsed by numerous groups all across this country, including the AARP, the National Grange, the National Conference of State Legislatures, the National Community Action Foundation, the National Association of State Energy Officials, the Alliance For Rural America, the Northeast Public Power Association, the National Consumer Law Center on behalf of its low-income clients, the Edison Electric Institute, the National Fuel Funds Network, and the Petroleum Marketers Association of America.

I think we are going to show more and more support in coming weeks, but there is a widespread understanding

that we are facing a crisis in this country and that the President and the Congress have to act.

Let me read a support letter I received from the AARP, the American Association of Retired Persons. As you know, the AARP represents over 39 million Americans, and this is what the AARP said.

AARP fully supports the Warm in Winter and Cool in Summer Act. This legislation will provide needed relief for many older persons who may not receive assistance—despite their eligibility—due to a lack of funding. Older Americans who are more susceptible to hypothermia and heat stroke know the importance of heating and cooling their homes. They often skimp on other necessities to pay their utility bills. However, today's escalating energy prices and the Nation's unpredictable and extreme temperatures are adding to the growing economic hardships faced by seniors. LIHEAP is underfunded and unable to meet the energy assistance needs of the program's eligible households.

I thank the AARP very much for their strong support of this legislation.

Let me also quote from a very recent New York Times editorial. This is what the New York Times said the other day.

A bill just introduced in the Senate would provide about \$2.5 billion under the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program. Half would be released to the States to help low-income residents pay their energy bills and half would sit in a contingency fund that could be tapped at the discretion of the President. When the bill comes up for a vote, likely later this month, Congress should approve it and President Bush should sign it into law. As the economy slows and oil prices rise, helping Americans who cannot afford to heat their homes is a matter of public health and safety as well as a moral imperative. People without adequate heat are vulnerable to illness, and people struggling to pay the heating bills may be tempted to skimp on medicines and even food. No one should have to choose between heating and eating. If they act this summer, as they must, before the Presidential and congressional campaigns send everyone home, Congress and President Bush can help make sure that nobody has to make that choice.

That is from the New York Times, and I appreciate the support of the New York Times on this issue.

Make no mistake about it, we have an energy emergency in Vermont and all across this country, and it is about time the President and the Congress treated this as the emergency it is. As many of my colleagues understand, the price of heating oil skyrocketed last winter, making it extremely difficult for some of my constituents and people all across this country to stay alive, especially when the temperature dropped well below zero. Next winter will even be worse.

At this time last year, heating oil prices were about \$2.50 a gallon. Today, they are about \$4.50 a gallon. Fuel dealers in Vermont are telling me that if this trend continues, heating oil prices could surpass \$5 a gallon by December. I must tell you, Madam President, that all across my State people are very worried about how they will in fact be able to adequately heat their homes next winter.