

make policy. Lifetime appointments are a serious matter, and voting on a Supreme Court Justice is one of the most important decisions a Senator will ever make. Republicans approach this nomination with a clear set of guiding principles, and we will make every effort to determine whether Judge Sotomayor shares them.

#### HEALTH CARE

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, we're all interested in reforming health care. And while this debate has yet to fully play out, we already know one thing for sure: any action we take on this issue will affect every single American.

There is no doubt Americans are frustrated with the increasing cost of health care and that many are worried about losing the health care they have. Many Americans can't afford health care or have to choose between basic necessities and medical care they need. This is what is wrong with the current system, and we need to fix it.

Yet it is also true that many Americans are satisfied with the care they have. They like being able to see their doctor and being able to get the care they need, when they need it. These are the things that are right about patient-focused American-style healthcare, and that we wouldn't want to sacrifice.

So while both parties recognize that serious reform of our health care system is needed, we must also recognize the importance of getting it right. Americans want reform. The question is what kind of reform. Reform is necessary, but not all so-called reforms are necessarily good.

Based on some of the things we have been hearing out of Democrats in Washington in recent weeks, Americans have good reason to be concerned about what the future holds for health care.

The biggest concern is the talk of a Government takeover of health care. Americans suspect that what's being sold as a Government "option" would soon become the only option.

Those who like the care they have don't particularly like the idea of the people who brought us the Department of Motor Vehicles handling life or death health care decisions, like whether or not they are eligible for surgery or whether they qualify for a certain medicine according to some impersonal Government board in Washington. They don't want to rely on bureaucrats in Washington to get their phone calls returned or their office visits covered. But the prospect of a Government takeover of health care is becoming more and more real.

Democrats in the Senate want Government to play a dominant role in health care delivery. Both the chairmen of the Senate Finance and HELP Committees have said they want to produce legislation that relies on a Government-run plan. And nearly half of Senate Democrats have endorsed a

resolution stating that any health care reform must include a Government-run plan.

Democrats in the House of Representatives are circulating an outline of how they would like to change American health care. Their plan would create a Government-run insurance model that could limit patient choices. Americans who want to keep their health insurance plan should be allowed to do so. Yet one respected study showed that 118 million Americans could lose their current private insurance and end up in a Government plan if this proposal was enacted. The House Democrats' plan could also lead to the creation of a Government board that would determine what benefits and drugs are available to patients and what prices would be charged.

The administration also wants the Government to take a leading role in health care. During the campaign, the President said that if he were designing a system from scratch, he would probably "go ahead" with a single-payer system. The Secretary of Health and Human Services shares the President's belief that any reform must guarantee the inclusion of a Government plan.

The American people want health care decisions left up to families and doctors, not bureaucrats in Washington. They don't want a Government takeover that denies or delays the care they need, and they don't want politicians telling them how much or what kind they can have.

That is why many of us who recognize the need for reform will insist on making health care more affordable and accessible, while protecting the doctor-patient relationship and ensuring every American can get the care they need, when they need it. This is the kind of health care reform that Americans want, and this is the reform we will support.

I yield the floor.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will now be a period of morning business until 3 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

#### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

The Senator from Alaska is recognized.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I recognize that the order is for Senators to speak for up to 10 minutes. I ask unanimous consent at this time to speak for 15 minutes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### NUCLEAR ENERGY

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, several years back—actually, it was

further than several years, it was in the early 1990s—there was a popular culture sensation in kids' books. The books were entitled, "Where's Waldo." Those with kids probably remember the books. It was a great way to test your kids' eyes and areas of identification. This was crafted by a gentleman by the name of Martin Hansford. You try to find Waldo with his glasses and his red-and-white striped hat. He would be tucked in on the page somewhere, filled with lots of other colors, and you would have to hunt through the page. More often than not, Waldo was tucked in behind similar looking characters who would attract your attention. They played a central role in the overall picture but ultimately were not Waldo. I see the young pages nodding. They have all seen the "Where's Waldo?" books.

I do not want to take time this afternoon talking about the "Where's Waldo." books, but I will tell you I am concerned and the point of my comments today is the concern I have that the Obama administration has engaged in a new game of "Where's Waldo" and doing so with our energy policies, only this time instead of "Where's Waldo" it is "Where's Nuclear." We will need to search carefully to find where the administration has hidden the resurgence of nuclear energy.

The confluence of high oil prices this past summer and the desire to reduce harmful greenhouse gas emissions has certainly and justifiably promoted the interest in and development of renewable and alternative forms of energy, from more mature technologies, such as wind and solar, to greater awareness of the potential for geothermal, biomass, ocean tidal energy, along with greater energy efficiency and conservation measures.

Congress in both the Bush administration and now the Obama administration was active in promoting these fields, in extending the tax breaks, mandating levels of ethanol to be used, updating our energy efficiency standards, and providing for incentives for energy conservation measures.

We are expecting to tackle a climate change bill at some point this Congress. In what shape or form certainly remains to be seen at this point in time, but we know that we must work to slow and reduce our carbon emissions. There is certainly a role for all of these technologies and increased energy efficiency to play in our energy future. But ultimately, as the new administration lays out its energy policy priorities, I have to ask the question: Where is nuclear?

In an interview with "U.S. News & World Report," Secretary of Energy Steven Chu says:

[t]he biggest gains, in terms of decreasing the country's energy bill, the amount of carbon dioxide we put into the atmosphere, and our dependency on foreign oil, will come from energy efficiency and conservation in the next 20 years.

Our Energy Secretary, Secretary Chu, has basically said that when it