

NAYS—1

DeMint

NOT VOTING—3

Hatch

Kirk

Lee

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motions to reconsider are considered made and laid upon the table, any related statements will be printed in the RECORD, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume legislative session.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent I be allowed to speak for 30 minutes and following that the Senator from Rhode Island be recognized.

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

UTILIZING U.S. RESOURCES

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, there have been a lot of comments made about energy, and I have to admit I come from an energy State. One-third of our economy is connected to energy in one way or another. I think the political games we are playing are just that.

I have a vision that I can see 50 years of prosperity for America on the basis of one thing; that is, actually using the wonderful resources that are in our country for our citizens and extend an opportunity for our kids, in spite of our budget deficits, in spite of our debt, that would enable them to have the same kind of opportunities we have had. The way we do that is to utilize the resources.

If we look around the world and we look at the most stable countries, we look at Canada, what is happening? Canada is living within their means. They have fairly low tax rates. They are utilizing their resources. They have trade surpluses.

If we look at Australia, they have a stable currency. Their currency has markedly appreciated compared to the dollar. The Canadian currency has markedly appreciated compared to the dollar. They are utilizing their resources to advance their country and their wealth and their opportunity. We hear all of these statements made by lots of people, but most of them are half truths. Let me explain what I mean.

There is nobody who disagrees that it is going to take us at least 25 to 30 years to wean ourselves from carbon fuels, if in fact we should do that. But let's say we should. What is the difference between burning a carbon atom that is coming from the Middle East or Venezuela versus a carbon atom that we produce here? We are going to do that. Right now 30 percent of our oil comes from either the Middle East or

Venezuela, not necessarily areas of the world that are akin to being kind to us as a nation.

Here is the difference: If we burn our carbon atoms, we add between 2 million and 4 million jobs over the next 10 years. Maybe even more than that. If we burn our carbon atoms—which we are going to burn carbon for at least 25 years—we decrease our trade deficit by at least \$200 billion a year. That is \$200 billion of wealth that does not leave our Nation, and actually it is more than that because if we get \$200 billion worth of American oil and American energy, that creates another \$50 billion to \$60 billion worth of economic multipliers.

We are the only Nation in the world where we have the natural resources to make ourselves energy independent, and yet our government will not allow us to have access to that energy. So my challenge to my colleagues, given the fact that we will burn carbon—we don't even have to have a discussion about global warming or climate change because even the best estimate is it is going to take us 25 years to 30 years to get off carbon. So during that 25 to 30 years, should we not utilize and should we not create a way in which we actually consume our own resources rather than send money and wealth out of this country to be able to utilize the resources of someone else?

I am for conservation. I am for increased mileage. I am for doing everything we can to wean ourselves from a dependency on a foreign source for our energy.

Other than our debt, the greatest risk this country faces is our dependency and reliance on somebody else for our energy needs. If we take our friends in Mexico and Canada and we take what we are producing, we are able to attain 70 percent. That is a tremendous change over the last few years, and that doesn't have anything to do with the present administration.

As a matter of fact, oil production, natural gas production, both onshore and offshore, is down in double digits under this administration. Permitting—not new lands that have been opened—existing lands that are open has dropped to 40 percent in terms of the permitting process. In our Nation we have over 1.2 trillion barrels of oil equivalent that we can access if, in fact, we would. That is more than any other nation in the world.

So what is it that the big political fight is about? Do we want to send wealth out of this country? Do we not want to take advantage of what is available to us simply because of our location as a nation that will actually create tremendous opportunities for our children, that will create a new vision of America that is energy independent as we transition off of carbon-based fuel?

Why would we not want to do that when there is no difference in burning an imported carbon atom versus burning a carbon atom produced here? The benefits are obvious.

We have a bill we are considering that, to me, is mindless. It is about the politics of division, and it is not about any truth. The fact is the major oil companies that reside in our country pay the highest tax rate of anybody in the world. They pay over 41.5 percent of every dollar of revenue they make straight to the Federal Government. There are not any other businesses that compare to that. Google doesn't compare to that; Facebook doesn't compare to that; Apple doesn't compare to it. They are all half that rate.

So we are already taxing the oil companies to the tune of almost \$36 billion, which went to the Treasury from the major oil companies in this country. The bill we have on the floor will not improve the revenue \$1, and that is a fact. There will not be an increase of \$1 over a 10-year period that will come to the Federal Government if we pass this bill.

Why is that? Most people don't know but my background is as an accountant. That was my first training, my first field. Accelerated depreciation just delays the time at which the Federal Government gets the tax dollars it is going to collect. It doesn't change the total amount of tax dollars, it just delays it so we match revenues with expenses, which is one of the things you are trained to do in accounting and in business.

By the way, oil depletion allowance is not allowed for the large oil companies. It is not allowed for them. It has been gone for over 20 years. So we set up accelerated depreciation on what is called intangible drilling costs. It would not have any major effect on the big companies, but it will literally kill the smaller capitalized companies because their capital needs are recaptured over a long period of time if we eliminate intangible drilling costs. So what does that mean? That means we will have less exploration in our country. We will actually harm the exploration for the middle and small oil companies.

Some will say: Well, we don't want to do that for them. We don't want to affect the small oil companies. We just want to affect the big oil companies.

The big oil companies will pay no increase change in their net taxes over a period of 10 years. So the only thing we can actually claim with this bill is the time value of money over that period of time, and the time value of money right now is less than 2 percent a year.

So what are we talking about? We are talking about a political game, and we are not talking about energy security. We are not talking about creating 2 million to 4 million jobs. We are not talking about substance. We are talking about politics, and the shame is that nobody out there is talking about a vision where America doesn't send \$200 billion of its wealth out of the country. There is no reason for us to do that, and we have had every excuse except a legitimate one for why we should not burn our own oil and our own natural gas liquids.