

individual of Asian descent to serve on the Federal bench in Massachusetts.

Indira Talwani is a first-rate litigator with impressive credentials. Her unique professional and personal background will bring important perspective to the Federal bench in Massachusetts. I am proud to have recommended her to President Obama, and I have no doubt that she will have a long and distinguished career on as a member of the judiciary.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senate will resume legislative session.

HIRE MORE HEROES ACT OF 2014— MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Nevada.

ENERGY POLICY

Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, as has been discussed much this week, I believe our Nation needs a comprehensive energy policy that allows us to develop our own domestic resources and use existing resources more efficiently. The United States is blessed with an abundance of natural resources and we have to act to ensure an affordable, stable supply of energy needed to power our economy by developing them responsibly. Democrats and Republicans must work together to develop concrete policies that will lower prices, expand domestic production, and reduce our dependence on foreign sources of energy and minerals.

That is why the debate we are having in the Senate this week is so important. As a member of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, I have seen how much work has gone into the Energy Savings and Industrial Competitiveness Act so far and have enjoyed being part of that process. This committee also has oversight over many of the other important, responsible energy policies we have been debating this week. That is why I was disappointed to see a procedural step taken by the majority yesterday blocking consideration of any amendments—even amendments related to the very legislation we are considering today. I sincerely hope that prior to the cloture vote on this bill we can find a bipartisan path forward to vote on related amendments such as the Keystone XL Pipeline.

Earlier this week I filed two commonsense amendments that I hoped could be and would be included in the debate this week. These initiatives would expand renewable energy development across the West and put the brakes on job-killing regulations that threaten to drastically increase our constituents' electric bills at a time when middle-class families across this country have already been forced to tighten their belts. Both of these amendments are consistent with the

goals of the legislation before us today and are worthy of consideration, I believe, by this body.

My first amendment, No. 2987, mirrors legislation I introduced in the Senate last December, the Energy Consumers Relief Act. This initiative would help protect Americans from new billion-dollar EPA regulations that may increase energy prices and, of course, destroy jobs.

The United States, and especially my home State of Nevada, continues to grapple with high unemployment, with record numbers of Americans underemployed, and with families struggling to make ends meet. Instead of advocating for policies that would put people back to work, the Obama administration continues to develop rules that will increase Americans' utility costs, causing companies to lay off employees and stifle economic growth.

Just last month the EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers put forth a new rule that will significantly expand Federal regulatory authority under the Clean Water Act. This rule would have a chilling effect, particularly out West where our water resources are scant and hydropower plays a significant role in our energy portfolio. Just this week I visited with local irrigation managers and our rural electric cooperatives in my office, and they expressed strong concerns that the substantial regulatory costs associated with changes in jurisdiction and increased permitting requirements will result in bureaucratic barriers to economic growth, infrastructure development, and energy production.

These are the types of administrative actions Congress must rein in. My amendment would specifically require the EPA to be transparent when proposing and issuing energy-related regulations with an economic impact of \$1 billion or more. Additionally, it would prohibit the EPA from finalizing a rule if the Secretary of Energy, in consultation with other relevant agencies, determines the rule would cause significant adverse effects to the economy.

All we are talking about here is transparency and accountability. American taxpayers deserve nothing less from their government. It is important to note that this initiative passed the House with overwhelming bipartisan support last year. The Senate should do the same.

My second amendment, No. 2992, on which I teamed up with my friend from Montana, Senator JON TESTER, to craft, is an initiative we have been working on for many years. The Public Lands Renewable Energy Development Act is a strong bipartisan proposal that will help create jobs, progress towards energy independence, and preserve our Nation's natural wonders by spurring renewable energy development on public lands.

In Nevada we need jobs, not policies that make job creation more difficult. Energy is one of our State's greatest assets, and I believe continuing to de-

velop renewable and alternative sources are important for Nevada's economic future.

Geothermal and solar production in my State is an integral part of the United States's "all of the above" energy strategy. In fact, my home State of Nevada is often called the Saudi Arabia of geothermal. Our Nation's public lands can play a critical role in that mission, but uncertainty in the permitting process impedes or delays our ability to harness their renewable energy potential.

Under current law permits for wind and solar development are completed under the same process for other surface uses, such as pipelines, roads, or power lines. The public land management agencies need a permitting process tailored to the unique characteristics and impacts of renewable energy projects. This initiative develops a straightforward process that will drive investment towards the highest quality renewable sources.

In addition, the legislation establishes a revenue sharing mechanism that ensures a fair return for all. Since Federal lands are not taxable, State and local governments deserve a share of the revenues from the sales of energy production on public lands within their borders. These resources will help local governments deliver critical services and develop much-needed capital improvement projects, such as road maintenance, public safety, and law enforcement. Additionally, revenues will be utilized to support fish and wildlife conservation projects and to increase outdoor recreation, such as hunting, fishing, and hiking activities that serve as a critical economic engine in the rural parts of my State.

There is no doubt alternative sources of energy are a critical component of our "all of the above" energy future. While we work to develop and perfect alternative technologies, we need to secure our economy now by having an energy policy that respects the cause of the problem—supply and demand.

I hope the Senate can put partisan politics aside and have the opportunity to vote on related amendments to this bill—like those I have just discussed today. These strong bipartisan proposals will rein in harmful regulations and spur domestic energy production. Congress should take this opportunity to take a major step forward in implementing 21st century energy policies that will create jobs and keep consumer energy prices low.

I thank the Presiding Officer and yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Minnesota.

REMEMBERING JIM OBERSTAR

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I come to the Senate floor today to honor the life of a truly remarkable man—a devoted husband, a loving father and grandfather, a dedicated friend, and a true public servant. Jim