

There is \$1 million to enable financing of \$1.9 million in repatriation loans to U.S. citizens who are seeking to leave a Zika-affected area outside of the United States or who have been exposed to or contracted Zika.

As part of the global health programs, there is another \$145 million to support the ability of infected countries to implement vector management and control programs to reduce the transmission of the virus. This is important because a lot of the cases we are seeing are coming from other countries. The virus has taken off in places like Brazil and other places, and when we have U.S. visitors to those places, ultimately what we are finding is that some people infected by Zika abroad are trying to come into the United States, even if they come in potentially on a tourist visa or what have you. So part of this effort is to control it abroad so it doesn't ultimately spread and reach here.

There is a lot, as I said, that is complex. There are a lot of funds available. The good news is that it is being targeted in the right direction. The good news for Florida is that as the only State so far that has had a global transmission of Zika, we have included \$15 million, which I think will be incredibly helpful for Florida.

So I urge my colleagues—we have all come at this from a different perspective. There were a lot of other issues in play and a lot of political rhetoric surrounding this, but I think we have reached the point where, at least when it comes to Zika, we can rally around the proposal that is before us. It is as good as we are going to get given the time constraints we face, and we have waited far too long. We cannot leave here on September 30, next week, without moving something forward, and I think this gives us the best chance to get it done.

I urge my colleagues to support it as we go into the new week, and I urge the House Members to look at this and rally around it. We have to take action on this once and for all. This gives us the best chance of success.

I am cautiously optimistic that we are going to be able to get this done over here. I say "cautiously" because I want people at home to understand that this provision for Zika is part of a much bigger product that involves funding the Federal Government, and there are all sorts of other issues that are still being debated.

As we heard the minority leader and others who have already spoken today—I read it in the press—they are not big fans of the proposal that is on the table. There are broader issues at play that could potentially derail Zika, issues that have nothing to do with Zika funding. There are other issues being debated that could derail funding for Zika that have nothing to do with Zika but involve some of these other issues associated with the funding of the government.

This is important enough for us to move forward. I don't think anyone

wants to see a government shutdown, of course, but beyond that, I think we have to get moving on this funding. We have heard loud and clear that this has taken far too long.

Let me say that if this money doesn't start flowing—because I have been really hard on the administration about spending the money that is already available to them, but now I can tell you that money is slowly dwindling. Here is the fact: If we don't get something done over the next few days, the research on the vaccines and other things are going to stop and come to a grinding halt.

If we want to save money on Zika, if we want to save money on this issue once and for all, develop a vaccine. That is what needs to happen. That can't happen if the funding is being threatened or if the funding is not something they can count on to move forward. Also, these local governments and municipalities and the State of Florida have already expended significant amounts of money to deal with this issue, including the mosquito control efforts. So that is important.

These cases are going to happen whether we fund it or not. That is why I wanted us to do this in April and in May and June and in July. It took too long. Here is where we are now. Better late than never. Let's get this done as soon as possible so that we can give assurance to our people back home that the Federal Government has stepped up and their elected representatives have done their job to deal with this issue once and for all.

With that, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. RUBIO). Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, today I rise to address an issue vital to the future of our country and to the future of our planet: climate change.

When President Kennedy told the Nation that we would land a man on the Moon by the end of the 1960s, he said:

We choose to go to the moon in this decade and do other things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard . . . because that challenge is one that we are willing to accept, one we are unwilling to postpone, and one which we intend to win.

It was an ambitious goal—one that many believed was beyond reach. The technology was not all in place. But on July 20, 1969, America and the entire world watched Neil Armstrong take one giant leap for mankind and become the first human to walk on the Moon. It was a powerful moment. We achieved President Kennedy's vision. We accom-

plished the improbable. We accomplished what many people thought was impossible because America and the American people are known for overcoming great challenges and achieving the impossible and because we set an ambitious goal that inspired us to push past the limits of what we had previously thought achievable. Now we have to do it again.

But whether we are looking out to the Moon or out to the stars, we have to focus here on spaceship Earth and save our planet from catastrophic climate change. We have to move quickly because to save our planet—our beautiful, blue-green planet—we have to keep it from warming more than 2 degrees Celsius, which is 3.6 degrees Fahrenheit. The planet has already warmed nearly 1 degree Celsius since we started burning fossil fuels, and we are running out of time.

Moreover, despite growing attention and growing concern around the world, humankind's production of global warming gas is still increasing rather than decreasing. We are in a race against time, and at this moment, we are losing that race.

We need immediate, bold action. That is why in the upcoming months I will introduce a plan that challenges our Nation to transition to 100 percent clean and renewable energy by the year 2050—a plan referred to as 100 by 50. The 100 by 50 plan will set a goal of having no more than 50 percent of our country's energy come from fossil fuels by 2030 and a complete phaseout of energy from fossil fuels by the year 2050.

There will be those who, as with President Kennedy's challenge, will say that is beyond reach, but we already have in hand the vast majority of the technology needed to meet this challenge. We need market incentives that will dramatically accelerate the introduction and deployment of these technologies. We need a continued effort to improve the affordability and efficiency of these technologies. Like going to the Moon, this has to be a challenge that our generation is willing to accept, unwilling to postpone, and that we intend to win.

Climate change is here, and it is already having devastating impacts on our world. We can observe climate change in many different ways, through temperature readings of the planet, through the measuring of carbon dioxide which drives temperature increases, and we can see it through the changing, damaging facts on the ground, from glaciers to fire seasons, to droughts, to rising sea levels.

Consider this. Since May of 2015, each and every month has set a new temperature record—the hottest May of 2015, hotter than any May ever recorded; June of 2015, hotter than any June ever recorded; July of 2015, hotter than any July ever recorded and so forth, 16 months in a row. As NASA has recently announced, August of this year, 2016, has tied July of this year, 2016, as the hottest month ever recorded, not just the hottest July, not

just the hottest August, not just the hottest months of the year but the two hottest months ever recorded on our planet. To put that into context, global temperatures in August were almost a full degree Celsius above the 20th century average, well on the way to reaching that 2-degree threshold that scientists refer to as a threshold for catastrophic consequences. It isn't that catastrophic consequences start just when we reach 2 degrees. We can already see the facts on the ground, and we can already see the carbon dioxide that is driving temperature is continuing to rise steadily.

We know carbon dioxide pollution that is spewing into the air from burning fossil fuels is driving those temperatures. That is because, as we burn more fossil fuel and emit more carbon dioxide, the carbon dioxide traps the heat on our planet's surface and global temperatures rise higher and higher. You can see that pattern going back hundreds and thousands of years. You can also see it just looking at the time from 1959 until now.

We have increased substantially the amount of carbon dioxide from 320 parts per million to now we have broken 400 parts per million. During that time, temperatures have risen steadily just copying that carbon dioxide level, just as it has over hundreds of thousands of years before.

What we also see is that in this black line, which are the carbon dioxide levels, we see the slope is going upward, meaning that the rate of humankind pollution is increasing, not decreasing. Not so long ago, scientists said we must curtail the pollution of the planet at 350 parts per million. That is down here, 350 parts. We are no longer there. We passed that level quite a while ago in the late 1980s, and here we are at 400, steadily going up.

So we see it in the temperatures, the hottest months ever on record for 16 months in a row, we see it in the carbon dioxide, but we can see it wherever we travel in this country through the facts on the ground.

Take my home State of Oregon. Our fire season is now 60 days longer than it was 40 years ago, with ever greater acreage being burned. Just this summer, we saw two wildfires—the Cherry Road and Rail Fires—burn more than 100 square miles of land. Another example, warmer winter months failing to kill the pine beetles, magnifying their destructive infestations. On the coast of Oregon, we see the rising acidity of the Pacific Ocean, the level 30 percent higher than it was before we started burning coal, gas, and oil 150 years ago. That was before the industrial revolution. It is making it much harder for the oyster to be able to reproduce and to form shells in those first few days of life.

Now, we may wonder, what does ocean acidity have to do with global warming? Here is the situation. The carbon dioxide we are putting into the air—much of it is being absorbed by

the ocean. The amount that is left is the amount you saw on the chart just a moment ago, but the amount the ocean absorbs becomes carbonic acid. The ocean is so vast, it is almost unimaginable that there could be enough carbon dioxide that we are putting into the air to be absorbed by the ocean to create carbonic acid to create this acidity level, but that is exactly what has happened. If the shells of our oysters are being affected, what else is being affected in the food chain? For example, what about the impact on coral reefs?

Obviously, it is not just Oregon that is feeling the impact. Every State we go to, we can find an impact of facts on the ground. We see communities all along the East Coast, from Key West and Miami to Wilmington, NC, Annapolis, New York, experiencing sunny-day flooding because of rising sea levels. We have watched the glaciers of Glacier National Park dwindle from 150 in 1910 to just 25 today.

As with the pine beetles, warmer weather is great for ticks, and out-of-control tick populations are killing moose in Minnesota and New Hampshire. The lobsters of Maine are moving north. That is not all. It is like the 10 plagues in ancient Egypt—more devastating droughts, more powerful floods, fiercer storms. It is a direct assault on rural America, a direct assault on our fishing, forestry, and farming, and that matters. It matters for rural America and it matters for urban America.

Our Earth is changing at lightning speed right before our eyes. We can evaluate this change through temperature records. We can evaluate it through the recording of carbon dioxide levels. We can evaluate it through the facts on the ground, and it is all going to get much worse, year by year.

So there is no time to wait. To save our planet, we must move quickly. We must move forward to end the burning of fossil fuels and to do so in a short period of time. We must completely transform our energy system.

In the first half of 2016, roughly 60 percent of our Nation's total energy output came from burning fossil fuel. The good news there is, we already have made a significant reduction, if you will, of the total energy picture. There is a lot of clean and renewable energy we are producing, but we have so much further to go.

On these bar charts, what we are seeing in red is the amount of energy in different sectors: residential, commercial, industrial, and transportation in the generation of electricity. The red is what is being produced by fossil fuels, and the green represents what is being produced by clean or renewable energy. These red bars have to go. We need to transform them completely and do so to the green bar, renewable and clean energy, by 2050.

This goal is achievable, but it is going to take enormous political courage. Those vested deeply in the fossil

fuel economy will—for their personal profit, their company's profit—try to hold on to the fossil fuel energy economy. It will not matter to them that they are destroying the planet, but it should certainly matter to every single Senator who serves in the U.S. Senate and every Member of the House. We are responsible. We are responsible to take on this challenge.

The first thing we should do, because it is a fabulously effective tool, is put a fee on carbon. A fee on carbon drives our economy to eliminate carbon in the most cost-effective ways, unleashing a torrent of technology, the development of technology in the best possible, cost-effective way to turn these red bars into green bars.

We have seen this work before. We applied this strategy to sulfur dioxide, and the result was that with less expense and less time than anyone imagined, we were able to tackle that problem, and what works for sulfur dioxide works for carbon dioxide. The impact on the price of carbon will be immediate and substantial. One of the reasons is, we already have significant, powerful technologies that will be mobilized by such a carbon fee.

Let's examine some of the major energy sectors, starting with electricity. The potential electricity we could generate in the United States from just wind and solar is over 120 times the amount of electricity currently generated from fossil fuels. This is the amount of energy currently generated in electricity from fossil fuels. This large green sphere is the potential energy—the theoretical potential energy—from solar and wind. So we have a lot to work with.

Here is more good news. Solar and wind energy has grown increasingly affordable in recent years. For instance, photovoltaic solar panels produced electricity at 39 cents per kilowatt hour in 2009. That is up here. In 2014, it was 8 cents per kilowatt hour, an almost fivefold reduction. We see in communities and cities all across the country, businesses and homes with solar panels on their rooftops. We start to see businesses putting up arrays, not just on rooftops but sometimes in their yards. Those declining costs matter. If you put a carbon fee on top of it, you drive that deployment.

Over the same period, the cost of wind was cut by more than half, from 14 cents per kilowatt hour to 6 cents per kilowatt hour. In the 2 years since the 2014 numbers, the story has continued to be one of declining costs. Those declining costs, together with Federal tax credits, have resulted in a rapid growth in wind and solar energy deployment.

Let's take a look at the solar side. We have on the red line the declining cost per kilowatt hour of solar energy and on the blue bars the increasing deployment of solar energy. That is pretty dramatic, rapid drops in costs, rapid increase in deployment.

We see the same thing in wind. On wind power, we see declining costs occurring here, and we see increased deployment since the year 2000. In the early 2000s, I was traveling the State, talking to folks interested in running for the Oregon State Legislature. In the very first trip I took, I was traveling in the area and saw the first big wind turbines being deployed on the plateau east of the Cascades. Then 6 months later, 1 year later, 2 years later, there was a huge increase in deployment of wind turbines, mimicking what we see on this chart right here.

Here is a fascinating number. In the first quarter—this is the first 3 months of this year—96 percent of the new electricity-generating capacity has come from wind and solar. That is a stunning number. Most people think the new generation capacity is coming from natural gas because it has dropped so much in cost, but 96 percent in the first 3 months of this year came from wind and solar.

If we make a national commitment to these and other clean, renewable sources, such as geothermal and wave energy, we can absolutely achieve 100 percent green electrons—clean, renewable electrons by 2050, eliminating fossil fuels in the generation of electricity.

This decision is not without challenges, just as the journey to the Moon was not without challenges. Most significantly, we have to match the supply of the variable solar and wind energy to the demand for electricity. As we know, for solar and wind to generate electricity, the Sun has to shine and the wind has to blow, but there are a number of ways we can tackle this challenge.

One answer is to shift demand through peak load pricing, encouraging consumers, for example, to shift flexible consumption, such as drying your clothes, to match the supply. We change the time of day we use our dryer. Another possibility is to increase the grid of electricity from one region where there is excess supply to another region where there is excess demand. A third answer is to store electricity, which can be accomplished through quite a variety of technologies. To name a few, you can store energy in a liquid salt solution at high-temperature solar projects. You can use pump storage, where you pump water up a hill and then you run it back down through turbines. You can use battery storage. By investing in these strategies, the elimination of fossil fuels in the generation of electricity is within our grasp.

Let's turn to transportation. Fossil fuels have dominated the transportation sector for a century, but that is changing. One change is the greater deployment and use of mass transit, light rail, streetcars, bicycles, and pedestrian transit. These investments get people out of fossil fuel cars. That trend continues, and we should encourage it.

Another strategy is electrify the cars themselves. We have seen tremendous progress in the electric car market thanks to falling prices and growing consumer demand. Today there are approximately 500,000 plug-in vehicles driving on our roads. You can see how that really started in 2010, and here we are 6 years later at half a million cars, with a steady upward growth. Electric vehicles are far more viable today than they were in 2010 because the most expensive component of an electric vehicle is the battery, and the price of batteries—lithium ion batteries—has been plunging, dropping fourfold since 2008 to less than \$300 per kilowatt hour.

We have also seen other parts of the transportation industry adopt electricity into their fleets. Mack Trucks, for example, has developed an electric hybrid garbage truck. Proterra, an innovator in heavy-duty electric transport, recently unveiled an electric bus that can travel 350 miles on a single charge. They are developing a recharging capacity that can recharge a bus faster than you can put diesel into a diesel bus tank.

What about aviation? How do we transition our airlines from fossil fuels? Well, biofuels are a piece of the puzzle. United Airlines has started using a mixture of 30 percent biofuel and 70 percent traditional jet fuel for flights from Los Angeles to San Francisco. JetBlue just announced a 10-year contract to buy 350 million gallons of renewable biofuels to mix into its fuel supply. That will account for about 20 percent of its annual fuel use at Kennedy International Airport. Other airlines, including Lufthansa and Virgin Atlantic, are embracing biofuels.

Let's think a little bit about long-haul trucking, which currently runs virtually universally on diesel. It is a big challenge. Biodiesel can play a role here, as it does in aviation. A few years ago, Poland Springs switched to a 5-percent biodiesel blend for its fleet of tractor trailers and tanker trucks. The company estimates that not only did it reduce its annual carbon emissions by 1.8 million pounds in the first 2 years, but it saved about \$70,000 in fuel costs. That is a pretty substantial incentive.

As more and more firms seek to replace fossil diesel with biodiesel, production has surged, increasing from 343 million gallons in 2010 to 1.2 billion gallons in 2014. But while the production and use of biodiesel is growing, we don't anticipate that it will be a complete answer. The production of biofuel has challenges of its own, including a potential disruption of food agriculture.

We have to keep developing and looking at a variety of technologies, possibly including, for example, the development of hydrogen fuel cells. Nikola Motor, an electric truck startup in Salt Lake City, announced plans at the end of last month for its upcoming Nikola One big rigs to run on custom-made hydrogen electric fuel cells. These trucks are going to be designed

to travel 1,200 miles between hydrogen fill-ups.

If hydrogen does become viable along established routes for trucking, we will need to generate a lot of hydrogen, and we can do that from electricity, putting the green electrons to work in this challenge and establishing a fuel deployment infrastructure.

What about residential and commercial heating? About one-fifth of all natural gas is used to heat homes and water in residences. Both of these objectives can be accomplished through electrification. The good news here is that heat pumps, powered by green electrons, can be cost-competitive with gas heating in most climates, even at today's very low natural gas prices.

Replacing the use of natural gas in the commercial and industrial sectors will be more challenging, especially industrial manufacturing. Electrification will help. Conservation will help. They will be part of the solution. In some cases, there may not be a solution. There may not be a viable answer. We will need to employ carbon offsets to reach net zero generation of carbon dioxide from the burning of fossil fuels.

So there are pieces of this puzzle we will have to figure out. Just as our predecessors in the space program did not have all of the answers when they set out on a mission to put a man on the Moon, we don't have all of the answers now, but we have a lot. With the diligence and determination that has characterized the American spirit, we will find more answers and we can reach these goals.

We have so much of the technology in hand to propel ourselves into the 100-by-50 vision, but we need political courage. We need commitment as a nation. We need to take responsibility because we are the first generation feeling the impact of the disruptive ravages of climate change, and we are the last generation that can do something about it. And we do so, driving a rapid transition from a fossil fuel-based energy economy to a clean renewable one.

One thing is certain: It is going to mean a lot of new jobs. That is pretty exciting. There is going to be a lot of innovation. That is pretty exciting. Already more than 2.5 million Americans go off to work every day in the clean and renewable energy industry. Some 414,000 are employed in renewable generation, such as solar and wind. In just the past 6 years, the solar industry alone has added 115,000 jobs. Another 170,000 are employed in advanced vehicles, working to move the automotive industry further toward hybrid and electric vehicle technology. Imagine how many more jobs we will create if we truly commit and invest in clean and renewable technologies. Imagine what a boon it will be to our economy to be the leader in these industries, selling and exporting the technology and the products that we develop around the world.

As we head into this exciting frontier, we have an obligation to do right

by all the American workers, the men and women who rely on jobs in fossil fuel industries to provide for their families. We need to make sure they have the support and the training and the help to transition to work in the new industries. We need to make sure no worker in the fossil fuel world is left behind.

These are the basic elements of the 100-by-50 plan I will be introducing to move our country from fossil fuel to clean renewable energy:

One. Adopt a price on carbon to put our markets to work on this mission.

Two. Utilize energy conservation—virtually always the most cost-effective strategy.

Three. Convert all electricity generation from fossil fuel electrons to green electrons.

Four. Shift as many uses as possible from the fossil fuel energy world to the electric energy world, including various applications in transportation and home and business heating.

Five. Sustain substantial investments in research and development to improve current technologies and develop new ones.

Finally, for the most difficult challenges, we may consider utilizing carefully constructed carbon offsets to reach net zero fossil fuels.

Fellow citizens, colleagues here in the Chamber, we need a bold plan to save our beautiful, blue-green planet from the ravages of global warming. This 100-by-50 is that plan—completely overhauling our energy system over the next three and a half decades, eliminating carbon dioxide from the burning of fossil fuels by 2050.

By leading this fight, America will benefit from all of the technological innovation it generates. By leading this fight, America will generate good-paying jobs. By leading this fight, America will have the moral standing to pull together the nations of the world onto a parallel path. America must lead this charge. We are the only Nation that can. We have the best scientific and technical minds in the world.

The American people have the courage to take on big challenges. By leading this fight, America will bring together the nations of the world. Working together, we will save our planet. The world needs to act, and to act now, to tackle the devastating impacts of climate change. It cannot wait. But they will need our example—a national commitment to revolutionizing our energy sector to spur them to action, to set an example, to work in cooperation.

Daniel Burnham, the great American architect, once said:

Make no little plans; they have no magic to stir men's blood and probably will themselves not be realized. Make big plans; aim high in hope and work.

We need to stir our blood and our hearts and our minds and our souls to this great challenge. We need to do everything in our power, utilizing every tool at our disposal. We are in a very real race against time, and it is a race

in which we are behind but a race we must not lose. That is our responsibility. That is our moral obligation to our children and their children and their children's children.

Some will say this can't be done, but I say to them and I say to you: Do not bet against America. We conquered the electron and harnessed electricity. We beat gravity to soar above the clouds. We cured diseases, invented the telephone, the television, and the Internet. When President Kennedy called us into action, we, America, traveled to the Moon. When we commit ourselves, there is nothing American ingenuity cannot accomplish. We will find the answers. We will achieve the impossible. At this moment, let's embrace the urgency of this mission and determine to act immediately and to act boldly.

Fellow Americans, colleagues, let's join together and set ourselves and our Nation and, through our leadership, the world's community of nations on a course to make this giant leap for mankind.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASIDY). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

#### ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding the provisions of rule XXII, the pending cloture motions with respect to H.R. 5325 not ripen until 2:15 p.m., on Tuesday, September 27; I further ask that if cloture is invoked on the substitute amendment, cloture be considered to have been invoked at 6 p.m., on Monday, September 26.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

#### 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AMERICAN RED CROSS, NORTHERN NEVADA CHAPTER AND SOUTHERN NEVADA CHAPTER

Mr. REID. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the 100th anniversary of the American Red Cross, Northern and Southern Nevada Chapters.

The Northern and Southern Nevada Chapters of the American Red Cross were established during World War I, when a small group of women came to-

gether to knit sweaters, socks, and caps for troops overseas. Since then, the American Red Cross in Nevada has provided invaluable support and services to those in need. For instance, during the Great Depression, the American Red Cross provided temporary housing, nutritious meals, and clean drinking water. The American Red Cross also provided disaster relief after the 1999 Clark County flood that caused extensive property damage.

For 100 years, the American Red Cross in Nevada has served numerous people in our community, Nation, and throughout the world. Today 650 volunteers facilitate essential programs for Nevadans, including services for the Armed Forces, community preparedness training, youth services, and international programs to reconnect families. Through these programs, the American Red Cross transforms the lives of individuals and families across the Silver State.

The American Red Cross in Nevada has made many noteworthy contributions to our community. Its services ensure that Nevadans receive relief during their most difficult times. The American Red Cross's work is appreciated and admired, and I wish them continued success.

#### 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LAS VEGAS NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

Mr. REID. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the 25th anniversary of the Las Vegas Natural History Museum. For a quarter century, the museum has inspired curiosity, appreciation, and responsibility for the natural world and its resources. It is my great pleasure to recognize the institution, its employees, and its board members before the U.S. Senate today.

The Las Vegas Natural History Museum began as a culmination of efforts by dedicated Nevadans, including executive director and founder Marilyn Gillespie, to protect the State's collection of wildlife and prehistoric exhibits. Through cooperation with the Las Vegas City Council and partnerships within the Las Vegas area, the museum was soon able to officially open its doors to visitors in 1991. Since then, the museum has expanded to include a multibillion dollar collection of regional and global artifacts, as well as a variety of interactive scientific exhibits and educational resources. In 2002, the Smithsonian Institution granted affiliate membership to the Las Vegas Natural History Museum, further enhancing its exhibits and impact on visitors.

Early collaborations within the Las Vegas area provided the framework for a history of community engagement that continues to define the institution to this day. Last year, more than 23,000 educational tours were provided to students from Clark County, each of which were designed to meet State educational requirements. The museum