

want the American people happy that we have put this into the hands of human beings, for wellness purposes. That is our desire, so that people not get dread diseases, or we find out how to cure them when they get them. Genome mapping ought to be heralded as something we did right. I don't know where it goes.

I close today by thanking Dr. Charles DeLisi for bringing this idea from the NIH to my office. Senator Lawton Chiles, now deceased, is the one to whom NIH ran, saying, let's get something going. He and I worked on these projects well together. We got it going in an appropriations bill. I thank him, and I thank many Senators who worked on this, principally in the committee, whose legislation is pending. That is the subcommittee that did most of the work and helped it along, more than any other group in the Congress.

I am delighted to have a chance to speak today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, I love to hear the story Senator DOMENICI tells about helping to make this human genome project a reality. He shared it with me some time ago. It is one of those success stories we can feel good about. It does provide opportunities for health improvement in America in an extraordinary way.

We heard recently remarks by the head of the National Cancer Institute who described one form of leukemia that had been diagnosed, and that certain types of treatments cured 60 percent of the leukemias and 40 percent were not cured; they didn't know why. But after the human genome study, they found out there were actually two different kinds of leukemias, and the treatment served one and not another.

A lot of good breakthroughs are on the horizon, I am convinced.

ENERGY POLICY

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, I will share a few remarks at this time about the rise in gasoline prices that are impacting American families. I recently pumped the gas at a gas station in Alabama. I talked to a lot of people. I talked to a young lady who commuted 50 miles plus, every day, to go to college. She talked to me about working part-time and going to college, how much the gasoline prices were eating into her weekly budget, and what she was trying to do to keep those prices down.

It does impact Americans. Gasoline increases hurt our Nation's productivity. It is a transfer of wealth that could be spent on computers, education, better equipment, shoes, food, housing, that has to be spent on a substance for which we previously had paid less. That is a diminishment of

our national wealth. It is important and should not be treated lightly.

Over a year ago, we had gasoline in many States, depending on the amount of tax those States imposed, selling at close to \$1 a gallon.

Senator HUTCHISON noted most of our gasoline comes from foreign sources. In fact, the Energy Information Agency reports that we are buying 56 percent of our oil on the world market.

Just last year, we were buying oil at \$10 a barrel, transporting it across the ocean, refining it, shipping it to gasoline stations and 7-11 type stores, for sale all over America. One could go down to a gas station and buy that gasoline for around \$1 a gallon, and 40 cents of that dollar was taxes. So the gas was actually 60 cents a gallon.

People say the oil companies are all evil and horrible, but I think those numbers are pretty good. Madam President, 24 hours a day at virtually any town intersection in America, anyone could buy gasoline, if we take the tax off, for around 60 cents a gallon. That is a remarkable achievement. Go to the same gas station and buy a bottle of water; you will probably pay \$3 or more a gallon. The little bottles of water cost 70, 80, 90 cents a bottle. Still there has been a remarkable increase in gasoline prices over the last 12 months.

How did we go from \$1 to \$1.50, \$1.60, \$1.70, \$1.80, and even \$2 a gallon for gasoline? What happened? How did it happen? If we are going to set good policy, we ought to ask ourselves that question.

The main issue is that OPEC wanted more money. The oil-producing group, the cartel, so to speak—Middle East countries including Saudi Arabia along with Venezuela, and others—that overwhelmingly supply the oil to meet world demand, got together and decided they wanted more money. They made a political decision they were going to do certain things, as Senator DOMENICI said, to drive up the price of gasoline. The world economy was coming up, so Asia was using more gasoline, other nations were using more gasoline. So they simply quit producing as much. They reduced their production, and they didn't cheat on one another. It actually worked. They created a worldwide shortage.

The price for a barrel of gasoline, at \$11 a year or so ago, rose to over \$30 a barrel. It hovers around \$30 a barrel now and is more than double today what it was last year at this time. That has driven up the cost of gasoline.

First, we have to understand that. In addition, we are now in a summer vacation time cycle. People take their trips. We use more gasoline in the summer than at any other time. That is another complication. Increased demand creates upward price pressure.

There have been problems with pipelines, and I don't dispute that. Gasoline companies, pipeline companies, the dis-

tributors, and the people who actually run the gasoline stations, set the prices as they choose, some of those businesses are catching this rise and perhaps trying to make a few extra cents. It does not surprise me that is the case.

Fundamentally, we have a shortage of supply in this world. The OPEC nations have done that through political action. It is very serious for our economy. There will be a negative impact on our Nation.

How did that happen? When political activities occur, you can only respond, basically, politically. It seems to me, this administration has not been alert at all to the problems we are facing. The Clinton-Gore administration has not understood energy policy. It has effected a series of small steps, really no-growth extremist steps, that have debilitated our own American oil and gas industry, leaving us more vulnerable to a determined OPEC cartel that demands higher prices. That is basically what happened to us.

How are we going to defeat that? It is going to really take political action to use our power against it. Frankly, there are some people in this country—most people who are sophisticated know this—who believe we ought to have higher gas prices. That is the Clinton-Gore Administration's policy for America. They believe if gasoline prices go up, we will drive less, we will buy their kind of small cars, windmills will become more popular, solar panels will be more popular, and that kind of thing will happen. They believe we ought to have higher energy prices.

I believe we ought to support alternative energy sources, but I do not believe we ought to be taxing American people to encourage them to alter their lifestyles, taking money out of their pockets, making them pay more money for gasoline for these agendas. I am concerned about that.

With regard to how it is impacting America, I think it is a fairly simple matter. What is really happening in this country is we are paying 20 cents, 30 cents, 40 cents more a gallon because of OPEC price increases. That is, in effect, a tax on American consumers by OPEC. In effect, when you go to the gasoline station and you buy a gallon of gas, if it is 10 cents, 20 cents, 30 cents, 40 cents more because of their prices they are charging, we are paying them that much more. It is not an economic thing; it is done by their political monopoly cartel power because of our failure to produce energy domestically.

We need to do better to produce more energy in this country. I have to say we have a policy in our Nation, by this administration, that is contrary to that idea. For example, if we are going to increase energy production in America, we need to promote production and exploration. One of the ways we could do this is to open up areas of federal land with proven oil reserves.

We have, in Alaska, an ANWR region with huge supplies of oil. In fact, that region of Alaska, is about the size of the State of North Carolina, and the size of the area where the oil would be produced is about the size of Dulles airfield. It is a very small area, but within that small area they can produce huge reserves of oil. This administration has steadfastly, through vetoes, refused to allow oil production there even though a majority of this Senate has voted for it, as I recall. They do not dare because they think it might have some environmental impact.

Experience shows that today's oil and gas production technology has a minimal negative environmental impact and in ANWR it affects a tiny area. So they have taken that source of oil—oil which could help us compete effectively in the world and stop the transfer of our wealth to Saudi Arabia and give us greater bargaining power—off the table.

There are huge reserves of natural gas in the Gulf of Mexico—huge reserves. Natural gas is one of the cleanest burning fuels we have. Much of our electricity generation is being transferred from coal and other fuels to natural gas because it burns so much cleaner and it is relatively inexpensive. Vice President GORE, in his speeches in New Hampshire during the primary campaign, said that not only did he oppose any further drilling for natural gas in the Gulf of Mexico, but he wanted to cut back on those leases already approved for drilling. I think that is an extremist position. They drill for gas right within the Mobile Bay, my home town. It is a clean substance, compared to oil. Even if it leaks, it evaporates rapidly. It doesn't have the sludge that oil does.

To stop production of gas in the Gulf of Mexico is an extremist position and one which will make us more vulnerable to Saudi Arabia and OPEC. It is not acceptable.

This administration refuses to allow production of oil in the Rocky Mountain area where as much as 60 percent of the land is owned by the Federal Government. They virtually shut off drilling in those areas.

There has been growing interest in coalbed methane production, in which you can drill a well into coal seams and bring out methane gas, a very clean burning gas. New technology has made the production of this clean fuel economically viable, but through environmental regulations which even the EPA does not support, this fledgling energy production source is at risk.

Finally, this administration has steadfastly opposed the use of nuclear power, which Senator DOMENICI mentioned. They refuse to allow us to store waste nuclear fuel, spent uranium fuel rods, in a remote desert tunnel in Nevada, where we used to blow up atom bombs on the surface. It ought to be

done. By refusing to allow spent fuel to be safely stored, it compromises our ability to produce more of our energy by nuclear power which produces absolutely zero air pollution. It is a nonpolluting source of power.

France already generates 80 percent of their power by nuclear power. Japan is moving in that direction. We have to realize we need to do more with nuclear power. In fact, in this country, over 20 percent of our power comes from nuclear. But we have not ordered and brought on-line a new plant in over 20 years.

Those are the actions which must be done. The policies this administration support are wrong, the consequence of these policies are clear: shortage of energy and higher prices. That is what will occur. That is what is occurring. I think we need strong leadership from this administration to deal with this problem now.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota is recognized.

Mr. DORGAN. I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business.

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

STORMS IN NORTH DAKOTA

Mr. DORGAN. Madam President, today Governor Schafer, from my State of North Dakota, has made a request of President Clinton in the form of a disaster declaration request as a result of substantial damage that has occurred in North Dakota from some huge storms that have rumbled across our State in recent weeks. About a week ago, late in the afternoon, in the Fargo-Moorhead region of North Dakota-Minnesota, huge thunderstorms rolled across the northern plains and dumped 7 to 8 inches of rain on that flat land in the Red River Valley in a matter of 8 hours—7 to 8 inches of rain in 8 hours. This occurred only a week after some regions just 80 to 90 miles North of there received 17 to 18 inches of rain in a very short period of time: 24 to 36 hours. There was an enormous quantity of rain.

These two storm events occurred in the Red River Valley, which is as flat as a table top. There is not a hill in sight. The result was dramatic sheet flooding in every direction. I recently took a tour of some affected regions in northeastern North Dakota—Grand Forks County and Walsh County and other areas, and small communities like Langdon, Mekinock, and a range of other communities. Communities in the region were hit with more moisture than anyone had ever seen in their lifetime in such a short period of time.

As a result, flat fields were totally inundated with water. Roads and railroad lines were washed away. There was one area I traversed in which they had a box culvert that weighed about 2

to 3 tons. The force of the water—which, incidentally, totally inundated these fields—washed out a 2-ton box culvert, and nobody could find it. It was gone. How does one lose a 2-ton box culvert? Yet it was gone.

It is hard to imagine these flooding events unless one sees them personally. We have had two of them in two weeks in the eastern part of North Dakota, and they have been devastating. As a result, the Governor has made a disaster declaration request of the President, a request which I fully support and upon which I hope the President will act with dispatch this week. FEMA is continuing in both of these areas—northeastern North Dakota and also the Fargo region—to do their damage assessments. Sufficient work has been done on the damage assessments for us to know we are going to require some Federal assistance.

Some people say: Why is there Federal help available in the form of disaster assistance? Precisely because there are some events which occur—floods, tornadoes, earthquakes, fires, and so on—that are so large and so significant and cause so much damage that State and local governments cannot possibly deal with the resulting damage.

That is why the rest of the country says: You have had some trouble, let us give you a helping hand. That is what happened during the 1997 floods from the Red River in the Red River Valley which most everyone will remember. That is what happened with the Los Angeles earthquake. That is what happened when the Southern United States experienced substantial tornado and hurricane damage.

We regret we have to come again with a request for disaster assistance, but we do. It is not of our making. It is an act of nature that is quite unusual. I have not, in all of my life, seen a circumstance where, in a period of 24 to 36 hours, we had 17 to 18 inches of rainfall in a very small area. We are a semiarid State. We get 17 inches of rain in a year in North Dakota on average. Yet a week ago today, Fargo and Moorhead received 7 to 8 inches of rain in a matter of 8 hours and, as I said, 90 miles north of there, they received 17 to 18 inches in some parts in a matter of 24 to 36 hours. One can imagine the devastation that causes.

We are trying to wrap up a supplemental appropriations bill probably by tomorrow evening. The hope is that it gets filed tomorrow evening. Both sides want to get it to the President for his signature by the end of this week. It will be attached to the military construction bill.

I am working with my colleagues on the Appropriations Committee to make certain these flood events are mentioned in the context of that supplemental bill. I expect FEMA already has the resources with which to deal with