

**NOMINATIONS OF WILLIAM BAXTER TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY**

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the nomination of William Baxter for both TVA positions be confirmed en bloc, the motions to reconsider be laid on the table en bloc, the President of the United States be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate return to legislative session.

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

The nominations were considered and confirmed en bloc as follows:

**TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY**

William Baxter, of Tennessee, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Tennessee Valley Authority for the term expiring May 18, 2011.

William Baxter, of Tennessee, to be a Member of the Board of Directors of the Tennessee Valley Authority for the remainder of the term expiring May 18, 2002.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I rise to speak in support of the confirmation of Bill Baxter to be a member of the Tennessee Valley Authority's Board of Directors.

The Tennessee Valley Authority has played and will continue to play a critical role in the future of Tennessee and the entire TVA region. TVA is the Nation's largest public power producer serving over 8.3 million customers through its 158 distributors with revenues of \$7 billion annually. In addition, TVA manages the fifth largest river system in the country.

Over the last 7 years as a Senator from Tennessee, I have come to realize that TVA is more than a power public company, more than steward of a river system, it is an integral part of the valley's economy and community.

An organization of this size with such an important role must have the very best leadership and management team in place. The board must be able to lead the organization into a future which presents many challenges including inevitable restructuring of the electric industry, addressing air quality issues, and managing TVA's debt.

I am pleased that President Bush has nominated an individual who has the experience and the skills to help lead TVA into this dynamic future. In addition, I have known Bill for most of the last decade and can personally attest to his intelligence, integrity, and ability. Simply stated, Bill Baxter is the right man for the job.

A TVA Director must fill three needs for the agency that Bill Baxter fits exceptionally well: business acumen, a commitment to public service, and leadership skills that will benefit the entire Valley. I will elaborate briefly on each of these. Bill is a business man, and a good one, who for over 20 years has shown he knows how to manage a company and meet a bottom line. He is

chairman of Holston Gases, Inc., a distributor of propane, industrial, medical, and laboratory gases. Holston Gases, Inc., has eight distribution facilities throughout middle and east Tennessee.

Bill is a public servant who knows the importance of economic development. He served as Commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development for several years, returning to his family business early this year. During his tenure in State government, Tennessee achieved 3 consecutive years of record private capital investment and job creation, shattering all previous records and winning national acclaim.

Bill is also a community leader who knows that a successful community must have citizens who are willing to give of themselves. That is why Bill has served as United Way chairman, board chairman for the Knoxville Zoo, and in a variety of other civic and philanthropic roles. He is also extremely loyal to his college alma mater, Duke University, where you will find him in the stands during basketball season.

Bill's energy knows no bounds; his ability to assess a situation and make good business decisions is second to none; and as a life-long Tennessean, he deeply cares about the Tennessee Valley. For Bill Baxter, the opportunity to serve on the TVA Board is a life-time dream come true.

Bill's background in business, government and as a community leader will be a great addition to the TVA Board, and I know he is looking forward to joining Chairman Glenn McCullough and Director Skila Harris as quickly as possible. Mr. Baxter comes before the Senate with my full confidence and highest recommendation.

**LEGISLATIVE SESSION**

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to speak in morning business for not more than 10 minutes.

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

Mr. MURKOWSKI. I thank the Chair.

**ENERGY SECURITY**

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I wish to address some comments made by the majority leader this morning. Comments made by the majority leader this morning indicated he was postponing consideration of energy legislation until next year. I do not believe this is being responsive to the security needs of this Nation. As we know, the House has passed comprehensive energy legislation. It has now been almost 6 months since the administration transmitted its report and rec-

ommendations on national energy policy to the Congress.

I do not think there is any question that had it not been for that the change of leadership in the Senate, we would have had energy legislation completed before the August recess.

When we left for the Thanksgiving recess, we assumed we would return to consider the stimulus legislation, followed by appropriations bills and items related to terrorism. The majority leader has stated that the energy legislation would come to the floor as soon as issues relating to the terrorist attacks of September 11 were addressed. Now we seem to have a change, again. The majority leader has announced we will turn to the railroad retirement bill and the farm bill this week before we return to energy.

I ask my colleagues: Is railroad retirement more important to our Nation's security than protecting our Nation's energy supply? Is the farm bill more important to protecting our Nation's security? This is like Lucy pulling the football from Charlie Brown. It seems the majority leader can always find something else to do rather than address the critical energy needs of this Nation and the energy security threat.

We see new threats appearing. I find this terribly disturbing, especially in light of two recent events that could jeopardize our national security. First was the announcement yesterday by the Attorney General that there was reason to believe that threats exist against our Nation's natural gas supplies should bin Laden be captured or killed. Second is the strong statement by the administration against Saddam Hussein and Iraq about their continuing efforts to develop weapons of mass destruction.

I need not remind this body, as I have often said, that we import a significant amount of oil from Saddam Hussein—more than 1 million barrels per day in September alone. Just last week two Navy sailors were killed defending against Iraq's illegally smuggling oil.

I am going to quote from an article that appeared in an Alaska paper and is entitled "Iraqi oil: 2 sailors die":

For reasons mysterious to us, a few Alaskans become irrational when it is suggested that oil from ANWR would be preferable to oil imported by the U.S. from Iraq. Anything, it seems, is better than opening the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Well, maybe not anything. Everyone surely must be heartsick over the loss of two American Navy men a few days ago when a rusty tanker smuggling 12,000 barrels of Iraqi oil sank in the North Arabian Gulf.

The two sailors from the USS Peterson boarded the overloaded rust-bucket as part of the U.S. effort to prevent Iraq from illegally diverting oil to shady foreign buyers, who resell it on the spot market—with much of it winding up in American refineries.

When the tanker, the Samra, went down, it took with it four Iraqi crewmen and the American sailors. The oil was in tanks hidden under bags of grain in the hold.