

for this country and American producers and workers. My point is, I don't want a harmful trade agreement to happen again. We have done the United States-Canada free trade agreement, NAFTA, and GATT, all of which led to bigger and bigger trade deficits year by year. The trade deficit has grown to \$452 billion. Every day, over \$1.5 billion more in goods are coming into this country than we are able to export. No country will long remain a strong economic enterprise if it sees its manufacturing base dissipating. That is exactly what is happening as a result of these trade deficits.

My point is that the House can have another celebration at the end of this week if they pass trade promotion authority, but they should not think it is going to happen quickly in this Congress. I and others will steadfastly oppose trade promotion authority in the Senate.

What I want is negotiators who might decide to put on a uniform. We send people to the Olympics with uniforms. They actually wear a jersey that says "USA." It would be nice to have a trade negotiator put on a jersey so they understand who they are representing when they get behind closed doors in a negotiating room, and it would be nice if the next agreement is fair to this country, fair to our producers, and fair to our workers. It has been a long time. I hope we might see that in the future.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico is recognized.

RAILROAD RETIREMENT

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I want to speak for a few minutes on the main legislation that is pending before the Senate, the Railroad Retirement and Survivors Act of 2001. The procedures that we follow in the Senate sometimes obfuscate or make it impossible to determine exactly what it is we are debating. We have so many different issues that we are debating all at the same time. I wanted to bring the focus of the Senate back for a minute to the main issue that we should be debating, and that is the pending railroad retirement legislation.

There is an amendment that has been offered to the railroad retirement legislation by Senator LOTT, and it involves an effort to pass the House-passed energy bill, H.R. 4, and also an effort to have the Senate on record on the issue of so-called therapeutic cloning. Someone might ask, How do therapeutic cloning and an energy bill relate to each other, and how do those two items happen to be related to railroad retirement?

Well, there is no relationship. Essentially, what we are going to decide shortly after 5 o'clock is, Are we in fact going to pursue passage of this railroad retirement bill and keep these

extraneous matters to the side so they can be dealt with under different circumstances, with full debate, later in this Congress, or are we going to get sidetracked and essentially get off track on dealing with railroad retirement?

It is very important, in my view, that we deal with railroad retirement. This is the opportunity, this is the chance we have. There are 74 cosponsors. I know that has been mentioned several times on the floor. I am one of those cosponsors. This legislation did pass the House of Representatives by 384 votes in favor, 33 against. While clearly I respect the rights of colleagues to express the concerns and interests of other Senators in bringing other matters forward, I think it is high time we went ahead and passed this bill and sent it to the President. A great deal has changed since we began providing benefits to railroad employees back in the 1930s. We have tried to update this retirement system to reflect some of the changes in the cost of living and lifespans of former employees and their spouses.

Several years ago, Congress told the railroad companies and the unions to sit down and work out their differences on this legislation so that we could get a set of proposals that Congress could consider.

This bill—the railroad retirement bill before us today—is the product of those negotiations. It deserves our attention and our support. The country owes a great deal of the growth and dominance we have had in the industrial and agricultural sectors to the railroad industry and to the employees of that industry. We need to be sure that these men and women receive retirement and disability benefits to reflect what they have accomplished, what they have done for this country.

This legislation tries to allow those employees with 30 years of employment in the industry to retire at age 60 without a reduction of their benefits. It would also provide the surviving spouse of a railroad worker with a benefit that appreciates the cost of maintaining a household and is not cut in half when the first spouse dies. Under current law, a widow or widower receives half of their tier 2 annuity, which, in most cases, will not be enough to pay for the basic necessities of life.

This legislation also allows current railroad employees to have their retirement benefits vested after 5 years rather than after 10 years, which is the current law.

Finally, the legislation repeals the maximum benefit ceiling that is currently in place and allows the amount of benefit to be based solely on the existing formula of the highest 2 years of income over the past 10 years.

These are reasonable changes, they are fair changes. I believe very strongly we should in these final days of this

first session of the 107th Congress pass this bill. We should send it to the President for his signature, and we should resist the efforts we are seeing in this Chamber today to bog this down by attaching other very controversial legislation by the amendment process.

I hope cloture will be invoked on the amendment that Senator LOTT has offered and that it can be withdrawn. We can then proceed to vote on the railroad retirement bill and pass it and have that one piece of very constructive legislation sent to the President before the week is out.

Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

EXPLORATION FOR OIL AND GAS IN THE ARCTIC NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, I rise today to express my strong opposition to exploration and drilling for oil and gas in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, or ANWR, region of Alaska. On two occasions, I have visited this remote and rugged wilderness region. In the summer of 1996, my then-16-year-old son Eric and I joined my good friend, Will Steger, an internationally renowned Arctic explorer, and two other men, on a two-week expedition in the Brooks Mountain Range of ANWR.

On the evening of June 30, we pitched our tents on the icy tongue of an enormous glacier. The next morning, we awoke to find ourselves in a snowstorm. We trekked through fresh snow above our knees through near-white out conditions to the top of the Continental Divide. Then we slid down the other side, frequently using our backpacks as toboggans and our boot heels as runners. It was an adventure I will always remember.

The northern slope of this mountain range initially resembled a lunar landscape. Giant boulders and other, smaller rocks covered the surface, which was otherwise devoid of plants and wildlife. As we continued, however, we reached the beginning of the grassy plains, which are the homes of millions of wildlife.

What impressed me most is how vast and untouched the ANWR region is. From the time we were dropped off by one bush pilot until the time we were picked up 2 weeks later by another, we encountered only one other group of human beings. For the rest of our time, our companions were one bear, a few caribou, who had not moved on to the coastal plains, and several quadrillion