

decade our fuel and feedstock costs have increased by more than \$100 billion. Our global competitors do not face similar cost pressures. Our vital industry has lost \$60 billion in business to overseas competitors and more than 110,000 high-paying jobs have disappeared. Additional taxes on the companies supplying these feedstocks will increase costs to our industry, result in high costs of our industry's inputs and make it more difficult to compete in the global market. You are to be commended for not linking discriminatory and damaging taxes to the very laudable energy efficiency and energy production policy objectives of the bill.

The American Chemistry Council urges the Senate to pass S. 2821, as it is a critical plank in a broader energy policy platform, and for you to strenuously resist including tax increases that constrain the supply of feedstocks that the industry needs to competitively make our energy efficiency products.

Sincerely,

JACK N. GERARD,  
President and CEO.

Mr. ENSIGN. It is supported by everybody from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers, the Real Estate Roundtable, the American Chemistry Council, the Sierra Club, the National Resources Defense Council, as well as hundreds of other businesses and organizations.

This, however, is a delicate compromise. Three times in the past there have been attempts to pass a renewable energy bill. They have all failed. This is our chance to actually pass something that can be signed into law. Unfortunately, the Alexander amendment would break the delicate balance. We need to defeat the Alexander amendment and pass the Ensign-Cantwell amendment if we truly want to encourage renewables into the marketplace in a much larger way in the United States. It is good for the country, good for the environment, and good for the economy.

I urge a defeat of the Alexander amendment and adoption of the Ensign-Cantwell amendment.

I yield the remainder of my time to Senator CANTWELL.

Ms. CANTWELL. How much time remains?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. There is 2½ minutes.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I rise in opposition to the Alexander amendment. Along with my colleague from Nevada, we reached a very delicate balance to get this legislation where it is today. I would hate to see that balance disturbed by the proposal the Senator from Tennessee is offering about wind. The reality is our nation is still only producing a small percentage of renewable energy, and we could produce much more. To curtail investment in one of the most promising renewable technologies at this point would be premature. We have to realize what we are trying to do is create continued incentives not just for the long-term, and this legislation is aimed at saving this year's investment cycle. If the Senator from Tennessee wants to have a discussion later about long-term

clean energy investments and what that horizon should be, this Senator is more than happy to talk to him about that. But this amendment before us is about the near term.

The bottom line is that we are trying to do is create stimulus for this year, we are trying to save the investment in the production tax credits, the investment tax credits, and efficiency tax credits. For example, PG&E has proposed purchasing 553 megawatts of power, which is the size of a typical natural gas or coal plant, from a concentrating solar facility in the Mojave Desert. If we don't pass this legislation, we are going to lose about \$1.5 to \$2 billion in investment and a big opportunity to increase the tax base of San Bernardino County, CA.

Another example, Butte, MT, has one of the largest polysilicon plants in the world, producing feedstock material for solar panels. Expansion of this plant, an investment over \$1 billion, is on hold because we haven't given predictability in the tax code.

Passing this amendment will also give consumers efficiency credits of up to \$500. Using that credit on insulation for example could save homeowners over 20 percent on their annual heating and cooling bills. The production tax credits in the underlying Ensign amendment, not the Alexander amendment, as a result in the next 3 to 5 years, we will have enough green renewable power to power 35 cities the size of Seattle. If we agree to the Ensign amendment instead of the Alexander amendment, with the investment tax credit, it will build enough solar power, and 1.1 million homes could instead have the power of solar and more renewable green energy. I encourage my colleagues to turn down the Alexander amendment and vote for the Ensign amendment.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, it has been written that King of England Edward I—known as the "Hammer of the Scots"—once tried to prohibit London's burning of coal. He is said to have proclaimed, "Be it known to all within the sound of my voice, whoever shall be found guilty of burning coal shall suffer the loss of his head."

Coal has always had its critics. Despite them, coal has not only endured, it has prevailed. It fueled America's Industrial Revolution in the 19th century. It fueled America's naval battleships in the early 20th century. It possesses the bright potential to help America get out from under the thumb of foreign oil-wielding despots in the 21st century.

The coal industry has evolved in the last centuries, shaped by safety and environmental critiques. It has professed a willingness to evolve further. But the harsh attacks and efforts to demonize coal on the campaign trail are becoming increasingly irresponsible and inflammatory, and destructive. Coal miners hear these comments, and what are they to think? They are patriotic Americans. They risk their lives every

day underground. They reside in the coalfields, where they live honest, modest lives, and where they attend church and teach their children solid values. And they vote. The last thing they deserve is to have their profession—or to have their father's profession—demonized.

These kinds of comments are counterproductive to the challenges that lie in front of us. If our Nation is to regain its independence from foreign oil, we must rely on coal. There is no getting around that reality.

Coal produces half of the electricity consumed by the American people. It is a cheap, abundant resource in a time when the American people demand stable, reliable energy prices. The U.S. military is already making long-term investments in liquid-coal technology. The chunk of rock that once burned in a stove will soon be widely used in fuel tanks of aircrafts, cars, trucks, and buses, and just about anything else we need it for. Coal will be around for a long, long time.

I support a broad energy portfolio. Renewable energies have their place in that portfolio, but they are not a panacea. Certainly one renewable energy alone, like wind, will not guarantee our Nation's energy independence. We need to expand our use of other renewable and alternative fuels. Solar is important, geothermal is showing promise, tidal has great possibilities, and biomass—particularly when combined with coal to help immediately reduce emissions that concern us all—is certainly a fuel worth investing in.

It is clear to me that the intent of the Ensign/Cantwell amendment is good, but the benefit of the Alexander amendment is greater. And so I will cast my vote with those who seek a broader investment in renewable energies that is also grounded in the realities of the continuing promise of coal.

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss the Ensign-Cantwell amendment to the housing bill. This amendment extends expiring tax credits for renewable energy production and development and tax credits for energy efficient homes and buildings.

Let me be perfectly clear. I fully support extending these tax credits. I voted for them last December when we tried to attach them to the Energy bill. I supported them again when we considered the economic stimulus package in February. I am in fact an original cosponsor of the freestanding legislation this amendment is based on. I have long argued that we have a responsibility to put our nation on a path toward energy independence. In addition to making us better stewards of the environment, this is also vitally important to protecting our national security by reducing our dependence on foreign fossil fuels. Done responsibly, it can also spur economic growth and create tens of thousands of new good-paying green collar jobs.

However, I felt compelled to oppose the Ensign-Cantwell proposal as an