

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

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To clarify the application of the safe harbor provisions)

On page 22, strike lines 9 through 22, and insert the following:

(b) SAFE HARBOR.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), if a State or locality receives funds under a grant program under subtitle A or B of title II for the purpose of meeting a requirement under section 101, such State or locality shall be deemed to be in compliance with such requirement until January 1, 2006, and no action may be brought against such State or locality on the basis that the State or locality is not in compliance with such requirement before such date.

(2) EXCEPTIONS.—

(A) ACCESSIBILITY FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.—The safe harbor provision under paragraph (1) shall not apply with respect to the requirement described in section 101(a)(3).

(B) OTHER FEDERAL LAWS.—An action may be brought against a State or locality described in paragraph (1) if the noncompliance of such State or locality with a requirement described in such paragraph results in a violation of—

(i) the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 1973 et seq.);

(ii) the Voting Accessibility for the Elderly and Handicapped Act (42 U.S.C. 1973ee et seq.);

(iii) the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (42 U.S.C. 1973ff et seq.);

(iv) the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (42 U.S.C. 1973gg et seq.);

(v) the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.); or

(vi) the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 701 et seq.).

On page 34, strike line 23, and insert the following:

(c) SAFE HARBOR.—No action may be brought under this Act

On page 44, strike line 1, and insert the following:

(d) SAFE HARBOR.—No action may be brought under this Act

On page 68, strike lines 19 and 20, and insert the following:

(a) IN GENERAL.—Nothing in this Act may be construed to authorize

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment be temporarily laid aside.

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

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I see a couple of my colleagues who have brought over charts, and that means speeches.

I ask unanimous consent that my colleagues be allowed to speak as in morning business.

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

The Senator from North Dakota.

WIND ENERGY

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Connecticut for his leadership on the legislation that has been pending. I want to talk about wind energy. I suppose people will think then that I am talking about the Senate, but that is not the case.

We are going to turn to an energy bill very soon. When we complete the pending legislation before the Senate, we will turn to the subject of energy.

Our country and its economy are terribly dependent on a substantial amount of energy coming from the Middle East. We understand the dilemma for the American economy to be that dependent on a part of the world that is so unstable. So we ought to find a way to be less dependent on that part of the world.

I was in recent weeks in Central Asia and understand even more, once again, how fragile circumstances are there. Our economy and our country would be well advised to create an energy policy that extracts the kind of ultimate dependence we now have on an oil and energy supply from the Middle East.

How do we do that? We write an energy policy that does a lot of things: increases supply at home—oil, natural gas, and coal—and does so in an environmentally acceptable way; increases conservation; increases efficiency of appliances we use; and also especially promotes limitless and renewable sources of energy.

I am interested in the wide range of resources that belong to the last category, renewables: biodiesel, using sunflower and canola oil to run engines, taking a drop of alcohol from a kernel of corn and using that to extend America's energy supply, and then still having the protein feedstock from the kernel of corn.

Today, I also want to talk briefly about wind energy. The new technology in wind turbines is extraordinary. Being able to take energy from the air, from the wind, using new, high-technology blades and coursing the wind through these turbines, then transmitting that energy across the grid to provide electricity where it is needed in this country makes good sense. It is limitless energy. We can have it forever. We will never deplete the source of energy coming from the wind.

The production tax credit that has been on the books that provides the enhancement for wind energy projects expired at the end of last year. It is unthinkable that the Congress, poised to take up energy policy legislation, has allowed the production tax credit for wind energy to expire, and yet it did.

The production tax credit for wind energy needs to be extended, and not for one year and not for 2 years, but for 5 years. We need to do that now. We need to do that on an urgent basis.

We just cut a ribbon on the first commercial wind turbine along Interstate 94 in North Dakota. There are three blades on that turbine, each weighing 4,200 pounds. The turbine is a remarkable structure, and the efficiency and the new technology of these turbines is outstanding.

When we look at all of the States and the opportunity to take energy from the wind, North Dakota is No. 1. We are 50th in native forest lands, so we are dead last in trees, but we are No. 1 in the potential for wind energy. Any young boy or girl who has grown up in North Dakota knows that. We have a

lot of breezes that move across the prairies in North Dakota. We are No. 1 in wind energy potential. They call us the Saudi Arabia of wind energy.

A week ago, I had a chief executive officer of a company come to my office, and he said: we have a project ready to be built in North Dakota—ready to be built right now. It will be a 150-megawatt wind farm. The plans for it are complete. Regrettably, he said, they are on the shelf until Congress extends the production tax credit.

It does not make any sense to me, at a time when we are trying to figure out how we increase our supply of energy, to have companies that have the money, the plans and the will to produce 150 megawatts of wind-generated electricity in a State such as North Dakota, but to have those plans on the shelf because the Congress is dragging its feet.

I know some will say: the extension of the production tax credit for wind energy has been inserted in this bill or that bill. In fact, the House of Representatives included it, I believe, just yesterday. They wrote another stimulus bill, which is a perfectly terrible piece of legislation, a big give-away to a lot of big companies that do not deserve it, and then added the extension of the production tax credit for wind energy on that vehicle. It is like putting earrings on a hog. It just does not mean very much. That is not the way we are going to get an extension of the production tax credit for wind energy. The way we are going to get it is for Members of the House and Senate to understand that we cannot come to the end of the year and have important policy issues, such as the production tax credit for wind energy, expire so that we have fits and starts and an industry that cannot get off the ground.

A major blade manufacturer in Grand Forks, ND, laid off employees because, when the production tax credit expired at the end of last year, projects were put on the shelf, including the project I just described—a project worth \$150 million in North Dakota that would produce 150 megawatts of electricity. They have the money, they have the plans, and it is not happening, because this Congress has been dragging its feet.

I know the Majority Leader, Senator DASCHLE, agrees with me that we ought to do this. We ought to do it right now. Yet we cannot get it done because we have some people who insist on playing games with stimulus packages that will go nowhere, because they make no sense and will do nothing to stimulate this economy.

Let us extract the tax credit extensions from the stimulus package. Let us pass these on a stand-alone basis. Let us pass that package of extenders that should have been enacted by the end of last year. Congress should have done that. Everybody knows that. I hope when we return following next week's State work period that we will have, both on the Democratic and Republican sides, a desire and a will to

say that what we did not do at the end of last year we will commit to do now, and we will do it on an urgent basis, because that is what will contribute to a good energy policy for this country. Then we will turn to the energy bill.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I associate myself with the remarks of my colleague from North Dakota on the subject of wind energy. Clearly, this is a circumstance in which the Government needs to act, and act quickly, to provide the incentives that have been previously put in place but have now lapsed, incentives that can make a difference between projects going forward and not.

I do not know what could be more clear than that the incentives for wind energy are absolutely essential if we are going to diversify the base of energy supply in this country, move to more renewables, and have a greater chance of reducing our dependence on foreign sources of energy that leave us vulnerable in a time of conflict in the very areas of the world in which much oil production is occurring.

AGRICULTURAL PRIORITIES

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, when I came to my office this morning, I received the surprising news that our Secretary of Agriculture has now apparently asked her counterpart in Canada to come to the United States to lobby against the farm bill that is pending.

I have never heard of such a thing. We now have reports that the Secretary of Agriculture of the United States is asking an official of a foreign government to come to Washington to lobby the Congress against the farm bill that is designed to help American farmers? What is she thinking of?

The article I am referring to is from the Ottawa Bureau of the Western Producer, and this story says the Canadian Agriculture Minister, Lyle Vanclief, received surprising advice when he called American Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman to complain about the possibility that a new United States farm bill would authorize a multiyear, multibillion-dollar farm subsidy program. Veneman invited Vanclief to come south to get involved in the debate. This is a quote from the article:

She told Lyle to put pressure on Congress, Vanclief press aide Donald Boulanger said. She said their political system is different from ours because Congress has so much power. She said—

This is quoting the Secretary of Agriculture of the United States—

Lyle, you have to help me lobby Congress.

This is not the way any Cabinet Secretary ought to do their business. It is totally and thoroughly inappropriate for the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture to ask an agriculture minister of a foreign government to come and lobby the Congress against a farm bill that is de-

signed to help American farmers. This cannot be.

I am writing a letter today to the President asking him to renounce these apparent efforts by his Secretary of Agriculture to have the officials of a foreign country become involved in a domestic political discussion in our country.

This is a very serious matter. This cannot be the way this administration does its business. I call on the President today to send a very clear message to the Secretary of Agriculture in his administration that she cannot be pursuing foreign government officials to come to this country to lobby this Congress to become involved in a debate in our country. What is next by this Secretary of Agriculture? Has she forgotten whose side she is on? She is in the Cabinet of the President of the United States, not in the Cabinet of the Government of Canada. She is not in the cabinet of the European governments, which would welcome the kind of advice that apparently she is giving and the kind of involvement in our domestic affairs she is reportedly seeking from the minister of agriculture in another country's government.

It is as though the Secretary of Agriculture of the United States has completely forgotten her obligation. The reason it is critically important for us to pass a farm bill is to try to level the playing field to some degree with our major competitors.

In case our Secretary has forgotten, I have a chart which shows an analysis of the difference between what our major competitors are doing for their farmers and what we are doing for ours. This is Europe. They are our major competitors. This is what they are doing on average per year to support their farmers: Over \$300 an acre of support. The comparable figure in the United States: \$38. These are not my numbers, these are the numbers of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. These are the international scorekeeper's numbers. They are the ones that are telling us our major competitors are doing far more for their producers than we are doing for ours. And it does not stop there, because on world export subsidy, this is the picture: This pie represents all world agricultural export subsidies. The blue part of this pie is Europe's share. Eighty-four percent of all world agricultural export subsidies is European. They are buying these markets. The U.S. share is this little red sliver—less than 3 percent. So we are being outgunned nearly 30 to 1. And we have a Secretary of Agriculture who is reportedly calling on an official of a foreign government to come to our country to lobby our Congress against a farm bill for our farmers? It is absolutely preposterous.

This is what our farmers are up against, and we have a Secretary of Agriculture who is supposed to represent American farmers, not Canadian farmers. Here is what American farmers

have experienced: The green line is the prices farmers have paid for the inputs they must buy. The red line shows the prices farmers have received.

It is very interesting that the peak of prices for farmers occurred at the time we wrote the last farm bill. Since that time, one can see what has occurred: A virtual price collapse. The gap between the prices farmers are paid and the prices they pay has turned into this enormous gulf. It is no wonder agriculture in America is in deep trouble. It is no wonder when I ask my farmers what happens if they do not have this new farm bill, the answer from one of the major farm group leaders in my State was: It will be a race to the auctioneer.

That is the reality. That is because our farmers are out here playing on the world stage. We are asking them to compete against the French farmer and the German farmer, and we are telling them: While you are at it, take on the French and German Government, as well.

That is not a fair fight. We can either choose to wave the flag of surrender and give up, throw in the towel, let our people be wiped out, or we can fight back. That is what this farm bill debate is about.

Now we have the Secretary of Agriculture of the United States apparently calling her Canadian counterpart, urging him to come to this country to fight against the farm bill that is moving through our Congress. I have to wonder what she is thinking. She is not on the payroll of the Canadian Government. She is a part of the United States Government. It is thoroughly and totally inappropriate for her to be asking a representative of a foreign government to come to this country to lobby the U.S. Congress against a farm bill for American farmers.

Mr. DORGAN. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. CONRAD. I am happy to yield to the Senator.

Mr. DORGAN. I listened to my colleague. I have not seen the report, nor do I know the contents of that report. However, as my colleague has stated, it is not appropriate, in my judgment, for Canadians to be lobbying our Congress about a domestic farm program, or for anyone from our administration to be inviting them down.

My hope is that that did not happen that the press report is erroneous—and the Secretary will put out a statement saying that is not accurate. If it is accurate, it is inappropriate. Senator CONRAD is certainly right about that.

This raises the broader point that, for the last 6 months, trying to get a farm bill out of this Congress has been an awful process. It is as if those who knew that we needed to get a better farm bill in order to enable family farmers to survive have been on a bicycle built for two, and we have been on the front seat pedaling uphill as hard as we could pedal, and the administration has been on the back seat with their foot on the break.