

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. SCHUMER. First, let me compliment my colleague from Connecticut for his great leadership on the issue of health care. As the acting head of the HELP Committee, he has done a great job on a bill that has garnered wide support and praise from the one end of the country to the other. So I salute him for his work and his diligence.

I rise today to speak in support of the critical resources provided in the Energy and Water bill, the bill we are debating, for Federal hydrogen and fuel cell research technology which will give America's automotive industry a much needed shot in the arm that it needs to revitalize and compete in the global market for fuel-efficient vehicles.

In June, I joined a bipartisan coalition of 17 Senators, and we wrote to protect the funding for this critical technology after hearing that the administration had significantly cut the budget for hydrogen research.

I generally agree with the administration on energy policy, but in this area, they are wrong. Hydrogen research is one of our futures. As a result, I thank Chairman DORGAN for helping. The fiscal year 2010 Energy and Water appropriations bill contains \$190 million in much needed investment in hydrogen technology and fuel research and development. The \$190 million that is included in the bill for hydrogen technology and fuel cell research is \$37 million more than the House appropriations bill.

It is my hope that some of this money, particularly given the fact that we have added extra money, will go to the General Motors Honeoye Falls, NY, fuel cell facility. It has the potential to create 400 clean energy jobs. The facility is ideally situated to play a leadership role in transforming this technology into reliable and affordable options for all American drivers.

The bottom line is, the facility at Honeoye Falls is the only GM hydrogen fuel cell research facility in North America. There will not be another facility with its potential or progress. It is one of only four facilities in the world that can go from research to application in fuel cell development, and the only one in America. There is one in Germany and there are two in Japan.

If we are going to abandon this vital area of research, several years from now it will create real problems for our automobile companies which we hope can get back on their feet.

This is the only facility in the United States that can go directly from

science to vehicle, as it did for General Motors in Project Driveway, where at Honeoye Falls the researchers there developed, designed, and engineered GM's Equinox fuel cell fleet. As I said, these are good-paying jobs in the Rochester area. Honeoye Falls is a suburb of Rochester where we desperately need jobs and have a great educated workforce. It will keep us globally competitive with Japan and Germany, which are ahead of us in fuel cell development and infrastructure—something we cannot afford. At Honeoye Falls, zero tailpipe emissions and research, development, and engineering are all under one roof and are an American treasure.

Let me now talk a little more generally, not simply about Honeoye Falls but about hydrogen fuel research and the need for us to move forward.

As the United States forges a global relationship role in the development of new energy ideas and initiatives, it is critical that we protect the areas where we are already leading the competition. That includes hydrogen and fuel cell technologies. Any compromise in our Nation's investment in this cutting-edge area of research will diminish our accomplishments to date, hamper our ability to compete with other nations, and hamper the ability of companies such as General Motors and Chrysler to come back and be at the competitive edge. We have come too far to close the door on this important research, only to hand over the gains we have made to other nations such as Japan and Germany. By cutting this kind of research, by not funding Honeoye Falls, we would do just that.

In confronting the daunting challenge of climate change and dependence on foreign oil from dangerous areas of the world, we need to have all of the tools in our arsenal to achieve our long-term goals. No one should question the fact that hydrogen technology has a clear and important role to play.

As we all know, hydrogen is the most plentiful element in the universe. We are never going to run out of it. Fuel cell vehicles are gasoline free, representing a dramatic opportunity to break from our current addiction to foreign oil. And fuel cell vehicles are emission free.

The National Research Council found that fuel cell vehicle technology should be a necessary part of our energy portfolio for achieving the target of 80 percent global greenhouse reduction in 2050. In fact, it is hard to see, if we do not do this, how we will meet that goal. That is an important goal.

In short, cars running on hydrogen have the potential to revolutionize on-road transportation, change our everyday travel experience, and clean up our environment by eliminating tailpipe emissions. Our Nation's automotive companies have made significant strides in meeting or exceeding the administration's interim goals for fuel cell cost, but they still have much work to do.

Meanwhile, while the United States—and I have just seen the chairman of the Energy and Water Subcommittee come on the floor, and I salute him for understanding the need for hydrogen fuel cells. As I said, this is one area where the administration has a hard-to-explain blindspot.

While we are twiddling our thumbs in this area, debating whether we should fund it, other countries understand the importance of this technology and are aggressively moving ahead to develop hydrogen vehicles. By protecting our Nation's investment in this program, we can protect our current leadership position and develop hydrogen and fuel cells on a faster timeline than competing nations. The alternative—to abandon a promising technology and allow our work to be the foundation of our competitors' success—is not acceptable.

In conclusion, I hope this legislation, with its increase in hydrogen fuel cell funding, passes. I hope that in its wisdom the Energy Department will understand the necessity of continuing the research at Honeoye Falls and fund it accordingly.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

#### HEALTH CARE REFORM

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, in 1945, President Truman delivered a speech to a joint session of Congress in which he declared:

Millions of our citizens do not have a full measure of opportunity to achieve and enjoy good health. Millions do not now have protection or security against the economic effects of sickness. The time has arrived for action to help them attain that opportunity and that protection.

Unfortunately, little happened after President Truman's speech. It is my hope that 64 years later, we will finally be able to achieve the health reform President Truman envisioned and our country deserves. We cannot settle for marginal improvements. We must fight for substantial reforms that significantly improve our health insurance system.

Every day, Ohioans are frustrated with health insurance that is nearly impossible to afford. Every day, Ohioans are stuck with health insurance that fails to protect them from catastrophic health costs. Every day, Ohioans deal with health insurance that too often discriminates based on age and gender and location and medical history. Millions of Americans are one illness away from financial ruin. Some 14,000 Americans lose their coverage every day, and 45 million Americans are uninsured and tens of millions more are underinsured.

We can find a way for Americans who have coverage to keep it and for those Americans who lack coverage to buy it. We can find the will to boost our health care system so that it is far less costly, is inclusive, and it is far more patient centered. We can make historic improvements in our health care system which harken back to the day, 44