independent judiciary. Iraqis will learn that to have a society of laws, you need an independent judiciary to enforce them. But here in Washington, D.C., we have a majority leader who is attempting to demagogue and abuse the independence of our American judicial system, to intimidate them to one particular ideological position.

This is undemocratic, it is unhealthy, and it does not respect the democratic traditions that require an independent judiciary in this country. It is a case of an abuse of power and it needs to stop.

We see today in the energy bill a provision to ignore the independence of the law to give immunity to a polluter. We need the majority leader of the U.S. House to understand that our freedoms come from an independent judiciary. The freedom of speech, the freedom of religion that would be taken away in one single moment from the U.S. Congress stands because of an independent judiciary.

This arrogance and abuse of power needs to stop.

FINANCIAL LITERACY

(Mr. PRICE of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, balancing a checkbook and principles such as saving and investing seem like a foreign language to much of our Nation's youth. Sadly, many of our high school graduates lack the basic skills to handle their own finances. Combine that with the spending power of teenagers, $150 billion annually, and it should come as no surprise that when they go off to college, credit card companies cannot hand out the plastic fast enough to these new customers who have no credit history, no income and no job. In fact, in 2001, more young people filed for bankruptcy than graduated from college.

With April being Financial Literacy Month, it is time to show that finance and economic lessons simply do not end in the classroom. The earlier students learn about dollars and cents, the better equipped they will be to enter the world with knowledge about how to save, how to earn and how to spend.

Mr. Speaker, studies have shown financial education has been linked to lower delinquency rates for mortgage borrowers, higher participation and contribution rates in retirement plans, improved spending and saving habits and higher net worth.

The need for financial education in our classrooms and at home has never been more apparent. Increasing financial literacy is key to helping our next generation reach their full potential.

THE ENERGY BILL

(Mr. DEFAZIO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I have nothing against classics. I drove a 1968 Barracuda to work today. But I am looking at hybrids because of the high cost of gas and to get a little more efficient.

The Republicans are offering us a classic energy bill today, firmly rooted in the 1950s: no improvements in efficiency, no investment in energy-efficient technologies, no breakthroughs. Even worse, $8 billion of subsidies to the oil and gas industry. Well, heck, they need it. That was only the quarterly profit of ExxonMobil gouging people at the pump last quarter. They want to give us more of the same.

The President's own energy information administration says this bill will, quote, have only negligible impact on production, consumption and imports of oil. In fact, they said it will probably increase the price of gasoline by 3 cents per gallon. I guess that is to pay for the new subsidies to the suffering oil and gas industry.

That is an energy policy for the 21st century?

THE PROMISING PARTNERSHIP OF INDIA AND THE UNITED STATES

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, under the leadership of President George W. Bush and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, India and the United States continue to make progress toward strengthening our strategic partnership.

Last week, President Bush and Secretary Rice met with Indian External Affairs Minister Natwar Singh. Secretary Rice highlighted, ''It is important that the U.S.-India relationship continues to grow as we recognize the growing importance of India as a global factor.'' Due to shared values as the world's largest democracy working with the world's oldest democracy, our countries are continuing on a path of cooperation that will strengthen economic opportunities and enhance national security.

After years of military conflict between India and Pakistan, the two nations recently approved numerous efforts of bilateral relations. And this week India's Prime Minister Singh met with Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf in his birthplace in New Delhi to discuss the next steps to furthering the peace process. It is mutually beneficial for both countries to cooperate for bilateral trade while helping win the war on terrorism.

In conclusion, God bless our troops and we will never forget September 11.

OIL DRILLING IN THE GREAT LAKES

(Mr. EMANUEL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, earlier this week the President said he would have written a different energy bill without the $8 billion in giveaways for the oil and gas companies. ''The President has made his views known, in terms of any incentives in the legislation, that oil and gas companies don't need any incentives when the price of oil is where it is right now.'' That is the President of the United States commenting on the legislation we are going to have before us. Imagine if we spent those $8 billion of taxpayer money on developing new energy-efficient cars or new types of cars that would make America free.

We have got to get rid of the old politics of special interest politics, writing legislation for special interests who give resources to campaigns, and start building a stronger America.

In addition to giving the big oil companies $8 billion of taxpayer money, imagine the oil rigs along the shores of Chicago, Pittsburgh, Buffalo, western Michigan. It is an unwelcome thought for 30 million Americans who get their daily drinking water from the Great Lakes. Drilling is currently banned on the Great Lakes, but this bill would change the law from today's outright ban.

Last night, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. STUPAK), the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY), the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. EHLERS), the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KIRK), the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GREEN), the gentleman from New York (Mr. MCHUGH), the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER) and I offered a bipartisan amendment to permanently extend the ban on drilling in the Great Lakes.

Consequently, this bill places the Great Lakes directly in harm's way. Imagine those oil rigs. Now imagine an oil spill closing the beaches and endangering drinking water.

KEYSTONE HEIGHTS HIGH SCHOOL BAND

(Mr. STEARNS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, this morning I wish to brag on my talented young constituents, the cover girls and boys that were featured in Roll Call this week. The band and color guard of the Keystone Heights Marching Indian, Florida, high school band visited Washington, D.C., this weekend. While here with Band Director Jason Dobson, they performed at the Jefferson Memorial and Capitol Hill. They played ''El Capitan,'' a John Philip Sousa march; ''Pevensey Castle'' by Robert Sheldon; ''Tis the Gift to Be Simple,'' an 18th century Shaker folk tune; and saving, of course, the best for last, student conductor Ashley Poplin conducted them in ''The Washington Post,'' another Sousa march.

French horn player Karlo Martin, still fresh after three sleepless nights, described the trip as ''really enjoyable.''