

corn, but would be made from switchgrass, rice, wheat, corn stover, so corn stalks, wheat stalks, and rice stalks can be used. These are things that are currently sometimes burned or thrown away. Also wood chips. So there is a tremendous opportunity out there in parts of the country that are not necessarily in the Corn Belt to be in some form of the ethanol industry.

Biodiesel is now where ethanol was about 10 or 15 years ago. It is on the cusp of really becoming a major part of our fuel supply and shows great promise. There are many spin-offs and by-products from ethanol. For instance, biodegradable plastics can be made in the process of wet milling. And right now a great deal of our packaging stores, like Wal-Mart and others, are now using biodegradable plastics.

So we think there is a great future here. And, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate this opportunity to address the House.

COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to acknowledge and lend support to the well over 1 million people who marched across American cities and towns in a peaceful, nonviolent way for fairness, dignity, and humane and respectful treatment of immigrant workers in our Nation. This ground swell of humanity wanted some very simple things. They wanted the principles of fairness and equal protection under the law to be applied in a fair and just way.

The people who marched are for comprehensive, reality-based immigration reform by this Congress, a reform that acknowledges the economic value, necessity and, yes, indeed, the codependency of our economy on the immigrant workforce; that also recognizes the inherent value of human beings and reaffirms the process of rigorous examination and process to attain permanent legal status and eventually citizenship. And it reaffirms a reality-based immigration reform, reaffirms the need for security in this country by assuring that the people that work here, that function here, are not hidden in the shadows but part of the workforce, integrated into that workforce and protected by the same laws and principles that all working people in this country enjoy.

I think what is happening in this country on the question of immigration is really about the future of our country. We have, as a Congress, a choice on immigration reform. We should not continue on the path set by this Congress in the Sensenbrenner bill, a bill that asks us to criminalize 11 million human beings in this country, that raises the specter of mass deportation and that ignites a flame of intolerance and division that this country is not about.

We don't need a path to create second-class citizens. We don't need a path that hides from our economic reality. We don't need a path that ignores the business interests. We don't need a path that forgets fairness and equity under the law. And we don't need a path that creates division and discrimination as a rule of law.

We cannot shun our values as an immigrant nation. This is a wrong path. And while possibly it is a short-term political victory based on division and based on creating a wedge issue that splits people in this country, it is a long-term defeat for this Nation.

I believe that we can do better. We can create a situation for the people of this country and for the immigrant workers in this country that is not blanket amnesty, that is not about open borders, that understands security is a priority issue, but also understands that comprehensive reform is the most important way to deal with this issue.

So let us not, as we debate this issue and as we continue to grapple with this very vexing and complex issue, let us not forget we are dealing with human beings, let us not ignore our economic reality, and let us put together a comprehensive package that accommodates both those realities and at the same time reaffirms the traditions, the values, the hopes and the aspirations of immigrants that have made this country what it is, that will strengthen it in the future, and that will continue the progress and the enlightenment this Nation needs.

OCALA NATIONAL FOREST

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. KELLER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KELLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to strongly oppose the Bush administration's proposed sale of 300,000 acres of national forest lands, which include 1,000 acres of the Ocala National Forest in my congressional district.

The Bush administration's rationale for selling our national forest lands is to raise money for rural roads and schools. While our budget shortfall is temporary, ruining pristine national forest lands is permanent. That is why all four of the living former chiefs of the U.S. Forest Service sent a letter to Congress on March 13, 2006, strongly opposing the auctioning off of 300,000 acres of national forest lands.

Mr. Speaker, our national forest lands are worth protecting. Millions of Americans each year use our national forests to go hiking, fishing, hunting, camping, swimming, canoeing, and enjoying the outdoors. The Ocala National Forest also provides a habitat for thousands of animal species, including rare birds and black bears.

Now, what does the administration say about these forest lands to be sold? Well, Under Secretary of Agriculture Mark Rey, who directs national forest

policy, said "These are not the crown jewels we are talking about." Well, they say a picture is worth a thousand words, so let me show you a photograph of some of the actual land in the Ocala National Forest which is marked for sale by the administration.

Look at the green plush forest. Does this look ugly to you? Does anybody really believe that this would look better as a strip mall or a condo project? I think it is a crown jewel.

And let me show you who else thinks this land is pretty important. This is a photograph published in my local newspaper, the Orlando Sentinel, of a black bear that lives in the Ocala National Forest. Now, this black bear is being relocated from one location to another location. Look at this cute little black bear. Does anybody really believe that we should sacrifice this little black bear's habitat on the altar of budget deficits?

This fire sale of forest lands is literally unbearable. It is also financially shortsighted. We cannot sell national forest land every time there is a budget shortfall. This is a dangerous precedent for Congress to set. Our financial problems need to be addressed over the long term, not through the shortsighted sale of national treasures to the highest bidder.

The proposed sale of the forest land is not even an adequate budgetary solution. The money raised from this nationwide sell-off would not even be enough to cover the short-term school and road needs of the communities near Ocala National Forest, let alone other areas of the country.

Well, what can we do about it? There are three things: First, I circulated a letter to the Florida delegation asking them to oppose the sale of our Nation's forest lands, especially the nearly 1,000 acres in the Ocala National Forest. I am proud to report today that this letter was signed by both of our U.S. Senators, Republican and Democrat, and by a bipartisan majority of our House Members. On March 1, 2006, this letter was submitted to the U.S. Department of Agriculture as part of the official comment period to voice our strong opposition to the sale.

Second, Congressman BEN CHANDLER of Kentucky and I are currently circulating a bipartisan letter asking Members to oppose the sale of 300,000 acres of forest lands all across the country in 41 separate States. Thus far, 52 Congressmen have signed on to our letter, and we encourage others to sign on tomorrow. After tomorrow, we will send this letter to the leaders of the House Budget Committee to urge them to oppose the administration's budget request and to encourage them to find alternative funding for rural schools and roads.

Finally, if we are unable to block this sale on the front end by having the administration withdraw this proposal, the plan would still have to be approved by this Congress, and I would encourage all of my colleagues to vote not just "no," but "heck no."