

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 one-minute requests from each side of the aisle.

ENERGY FACTS VERSUS FICTION

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

Mr. ISRAEL. Madam Speaker, here is today's energy Facts versus Fiction, Volume II.

According to Gal Luft of the Institute for the Analysis of Global Security, at \$137 per barrel of oil, OPEC could potentially buy the Bank of America within 5 weeks of production revenues; Apple Computer within 12 days; General Motors within 5 days, and it would take 2.5 years for OPEC to buy a 20 percent blocking vote in every S&P 500 company.

Fact: The administration's budget slashes \$467 million from energy efficiency and renewable energy accounts. The House Appropriations Committee added \$1.2 billion. It is a much better investment, Madam Speaker, to add \$1.2 billion than to give away the Bank of America, Apple Computer and General Motors to the Saudis.

We need an energy policy that invests in American ingenuity, not Saudi Arabia oil profits.

BALLISTIC MISSILE DEFENSES FOR ISRAEL

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

Mr. KIRK. Mr. Speaker, hours ago Iran fired nine long-range missiles, including the improved Shahab-III that can hit the State of Israel. It is time for the United States to offer full ballistic missile defenses for Israel.

Democracies are best when they stick together. We joined 10 years ago with the U.S. Army and Israeli military to build the medium-range Arrow missile defense system. While good, it offers Israel only a defense in the last minute. Three years ago we gave Israel "Eyes in the Sky," early warning data that gave her warning time an increase from 1 minute to 11 minutes.

Now, in the face of the rapidly growing Iranian threat, the G8 should think about sanctions, like a gasoline quarantine because Iran is totally dependent on half its gas from foreign tankers, most insured by Lloyds of London, and we can work with the British on that.

But most importantly, we should follow the direction of 70 Democrats and Republicans in the Kirk-Harman letter to offer full ballistic missile defenses for Israel. Our defenses have five times the range of Israel's and can do the most to lower the rising tensions in the Middle East.

MIDDLE CLASS SQUEEZE

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

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, middle-income Americans are paying a high price for the Bush economic policies that have taken us deep into debt and to economic recession. While the prices of groceries, gas, education, and health care have all gone up, the purchasing power of a middle-income salary has actually fallen over the last 7 years.

Unfortunately, Republicans and President Bush continue to defend the status quo, refusing to support our efforts to help middle class families feeling the economic squeeze. House Democrats are working on new solutions to deal with this immediate economic crisis, and for long-term economic recovery. We have taken action to extend unemployment benefits, insurance benefits, and also so that workers can continue to receive important financial assistance while they look for jobs in these trying economic times. We have also passed legislation to address the Nation's housing crisis so that millions of Americans will not be forced into foreclosure this coming year.

Mr. Speaker, House Democrats also support a second economic recovery plan, and we hope we can gather Republican support for it.

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WE NEED TO FIX THE ENERGY PROBLEMS OF THIS COUNTRY IN THIS HOUSE NOW

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

Mr. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about gas prices and energy, specifically, the lack of action here in Congress on this issue. Our constituents want us to do something, and the reality is that we have the ability to do something but we're not.

Mr. Speaker, according to media reports, the House leadership is doing everything possible to stop a vote on opening more of the oil and gas reserves available in this Nation. It sounds like the entire appropriations process might be stopped rather than having a vote on using our resources so we aren't so dependent on OPEC. I really don't understand why. Maybe it's being captive to the extreme environmental lobby, or maybe it's a completely different philosophy that says we should not do everything possible to bring gas prices down.

What I do know, Mr. Speaker, is that we are not going above and beyond to fix this problem. This House is going above and beyond to stop a viable solution. That's wrong. I implore the Democrat leadership to let real energy solutions come up for a vote and get gas prices down.

BIG OIL DOESN'T NEED MORE LAND TO DRILL; THEY SHOULD USE IT OR LOSE IT

(Ms. SHEA-PORTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Mr. Speaker, gas prices are hovering around \$4 a gallon now. Americans are having difficulty just finding the money to drive to the store. The energy policies of the Bush administration over the past 7 years have helped only one group, Big Oil. They're doing just fine, thank you very much.

House Democrats are moving America in a new direction towards energy independence. We raised the miles-per-gallon requirement for the first time in over 30 years. We are putting money into research and development. We're requiring energy-efficient appliances, and we are creating green jobs, among other things.

We're also demanding that oil companies drill now. They have 68 million acres of land that they could drill on. They have their permits. They need to get to work now. Last month, House Republicans could have joined us in sending a strong message to oil companies that they need to start drilling on already approved lands. But instead, House Republicans once again sided with both Big Oil and President Bush.

Mr. Speaker, the oil companies need to use those permits or lose those permits. America wants oil companies to get to work now and stop playing politics.

HOUSE REPUBLICANS STAND READY TO HELP AMERICANS COMBAT INCREASED ENERGY COSTS

(Ms. GRANGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, House Republicans set forth an energy agenda that addresses the number one concern facing American families today: the high price of gasoline. The high price of gas is costing hardworking families an average of \$4.11 a gallon. That's \$1.70 more a gallon than it was in January 2007 with no relief in sight.

Skyrocketing gas prices have taken a dramatic toll on almost every area of our lives. Families are having to adjust by tightening budgets and trimming back family vacations. Small businesses, like the ones in my district, are watching their profits shrink while making tough decisions about expanding their companies or being able to make their payroll.

House Republicans have a plan that will increase production of American-made energy in an environmentally safe way. Our plan will promote new, clean, and reliable sources of energy while cutting red tape and increasing the supply of American-made fuel and energy. Our plan also encourages greater energy efficiency by offering conservation tax incentives to Americans

who make their home, car, and businesses more energy efficient.

House Republicans stand ready and willing to help American families combat the increased costs of energy. I invite my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to join us.

CALLING ON THE PRESIDENT TO RESCIND HIS VETO THREAT OF MEDICARE IMPROVEMENTS

(Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today to urge the President to reconsider his veto threat of H.R. 6331, the broadly supported Medicare improvement legislation that was passed by this House on June 24. It is my hope that the other body takes quick action to pass this responsible legislation. The Medicare beneficiaries and veterans who are enrolled in TRICARE are depending on this physician payment fix becoming law.

If this legislation is not passed into law, millions of Americans will no longer be able to visit their physicians and receive the regular quality care that they rely on. I understand that some Members of the Congress have concerns about the pay-for in this legislation. However, this Congress and this government cannot continue to pass the buck on fiscal responsibility whenever we are faced with difficult choices.

I believe we have found a responsible way to pay for the physician payment fix that is in the best interest of all Medicare beneficiaries. And again, I urge the President to rescind his veto threat.

A FEW FACTS ON ENERGY

(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, here are a few facts on energy I would like to share. America currently has an estimated 175 trillion cubic feet of natural gas and 1.1 trillion barrels of oil that is off-limits to exploration. In ANWR alone, there is an estimated 10.4 billion barrels of oil. Currently 85 percent of the lower 48 Outer Continental Shelf energy resources remain under the lock and key of the Federal Government. Only 6 percent of the 700 million acres of federally owned subsurface mineral estate has been leased for oil and gas exploration.

The estimated Federal revenue that would be generated by opening up these lands that are currently off-limits to leasing is upwards of \$60 trillion. Americans support exploring for these resources and breaking America's dependence on foreign oil. The American people are demanding Congress take action. That is why House Republicans

will continue to fight for an all-of-the-above energy plan that will produce more American-made energy while investing in alternative fuels and promoting conservation.

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

RECOGNIZING THE POSITIVE CONTRIBUTIONS OF IMMIGRANTS

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

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, Congress came back this week from celebrating our Nation's Independence Day. This is a special time to reflect on America's difficult history and the true essence of what she stands for. Since the beginning, America has thrived on the contributions of its immigrant labor force. Sadly today, the positive contributions of the immigrant labor force to our society are too often unnoticed.

Hardworking families contribute daily and pay their share into the American system. Hardworking mothers sometimes work three jobs, give up their weekends, and take overtime and night shifts to feed and clothe their children. Hardworking fathers wake up at 4 a.m. to go to work, earn below minimum wages, and manage to provide for their families.

Immigrants contribute in taxes from their paychecks just like the next person through shopping at a variety of stores, restaurants, and gas stations. In fact, the IRS reported that between 1996 to 2003, immigrants contributed \$50 billion in Federal taxes.

We cannot afford to ignore the figures, and more importantly, we cannot afford to ignore the positive contributions of immigrants in America. We need comprehensive immigration for the security of our Nation.

MORE CONSERVATION AND MORE DRILLING IS NEEDED FOR OUR ENERGY PROBLEM

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

Mr. KELLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the problem of skyrocketing gas prices. We must reduce our dependence on foreign oil. Our constituents deserve straight talk on this issue and here it is: The main component of the price of gasoline at the pump is crude oil. Crude oil is a commodity governed by the law of supply and demand. Therefore, we must reduce our demand and increase our supply.

We should reduce our demand by having tax incentives for hybrids, raising fuel efficiency standards, and investing in alternative renewable energy sources like wind, solar, biomass, and nuclear. We must also increase our domestic supply of oil. We can do that by drilling in Alaska, drilling in the gulf of Mexico, and building more refineries.

The straight talk is we need a comprehensive approach of more drilling and more conservation to achieve long-term energy independence.

JOB LOSSES CONTINUE FOR SIX CONSECUTIVE MONTHS AS ECONOMY GETS WORSE

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

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, every month this year the Bush economy has lost more jobs than it has created. In June, 62,000 jobs were lost bringing the total number this year to 428,000 jobs lost. Yet President Bush and some Washington Republicans continue to contend that our economy is not in a recession. These job numbers were particularly devastating to the 3.8 million workers who have lost their jobs and continue to struggle to find new work. It's difficult to find a job when the economy is simply not producing them.

That's why the Democrats fought hard to pass legislation to extend unemployment benefits for an additional 13 weeks to more than 1.6 million Americans who have been hurt by President Bush's economic policies. This money will allow workers in my home State of New Jersey and throughout the Nation to pay their bills and put food on the table while they continue to look for a job.

Extending unemployment insurance is just another example of how Democrats are changing the way business is done in Washington. No longer are the needs of working families forgotten in this Congress.

SAME OLD EXCUSES WON'T WORK ANY LONGER

(Mrs. MILLER of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, in spite of the fact that the American people have been begging, literally begging this Congress to act on the energy crisis, all we've heard from the majority are excuses for why we cannot access our own domestic supplies of energy. They say that we cannot drill in the ANWR because it will adversely affect the caribou. This despite the fact that the caribou have literally flourished along the north slope of Alaska since the introduction of the pipeline.

They say we cannot drill offshore because of environmental threats. This despite the fact that offshore platforms in the Gulf of Mexico have survived both Hurricanes Katrina and Rita with very limited or no environmental damage.

The majority continues to offer excuse after excuse but offers nothing to the American consumers who want some relief at the pump. With gas prices crashing through \$4 per gallon