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House of Representatives

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HARRIS).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
January 31, 2012.

I hereby appoint the Honorable ANDY HARRIS to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 17, 2012, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes each, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 1:50 p.m.

KEYSTONE XL PIPELINE AND THE K-FAST BILL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, across the globe, Iran continues its saber rattling. The little fella from the desert, Ahmadinejad, threatens to block the Strait of Hormuz and all the oil shipments going through it.

This worries Americans who can't afford for the price of gasoline to go up.

What if we made unstable Middle Eastern countries irrelevant to our energy security? Imagine a place where the United States actually controlled its own energy destiny. There are two different paths to that world. The administration and environmental obstructionists will tell you the only way to energy independence is through so-called ''clean and green'' energy projects funded at taxpayer expense.

This may sound good in a sound bite, but these projects are expensive, unreliable, and in many cases they continue to fail.

Cases in point, three companies: Solyndra, Ener1, and Beacon Power. In each of these cases, the Federal Government has taken taxpayer money and gambled it on risky projects. With Solyndra, half a billion taxpayer dollars were poured into a company that was doomed to fail. The result: Solyndra went belly up, 1,000 people lost their jobs, and the American people will never see a refund on their money.

Clean energy may be a noble goal, but we're just not there yet.

The second path to controlling our energy destiny is an all-of-the-above approach: solar, wind, nuclear, clean coal, natural gas, and yes, oil.

For now, oil is the most reliable and cost-effective source of energy we have. That's one reason why the Keystone XL pipeline is a golden opportunity for our country. This project, unlike Solyndra, won't cost the taxpayers any of their money.

It would bring 750,000 barrels of oil per day from our stable ally, Canada, down to refineries in my district in southeast Texas. Equally important, it would create at least 100,000 jobs in its lifetime, including 20,000 immediate construction and manufacturing jobs. But unfortunately, the administration has said no to Keystone pipeline. It said no to our national interest. It said no to jobs. It said no to energy security. It said no to our ally Canada. It said no to the will of the American people because most Americans support the pipeline. But it did say yes—yes to China, because China will probably be the recipient of that Canadian oil and the jobs if the pipeline is not built in the United States. Now, isn't that lovely?

Keystone would enhance our energy security by bringing almost as much oil as we get from Saudi Arabia to the United States. It would help enhance our foreign policy by bolstering our relationship with Canada instead of depending on unstable Middle Eastern countries. But radical obstructionists got their way when they took to the streets in front of the White House and threatened their support for the President.

They seem to conveniently forget that pipelines are the safest way to transport oil.

Failure to approve the pipeline is putting our national security, energy security, and economic security at risk. That is why I have introduced, along with my friend DAN BOREN from Oklahoma, the bipartisan Keystone for a Secure Tomorrow Act, or K-FAST for short. This bill would allow Congress to act immediately and approve the permit for the Keystone XL pipeline.

There is precedent for congressional approval of pipelines. In 1973, the same type of special interest groups were holding back the permit for the Trans-Alaska pipeline. After 4 years of delay, Congress finally took direct action and successfully approved that pipeline.

I'm pleased that a bipartisan group of 45 Senators agree that Congress should approve the Keystone pipeline. The Hoeven-Lugar-Vitter bill, similar to my bill, would do that.

While green energy is a worthwhile ambition, we simply cannot afford to reject a reliable supply of energy.

So while the administration continues to say no to Americans, Congress has the obligation and the legal ability to say yes. Let's make Keystone pipeline a reality.

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