

rush through my comments, and to the chairman of the committee.

I, too, just want to associate myself with the remarks of the earlier debate, but I do want to express the fact that the running of government impacts on the lives of individuals, particularly those who are facing stress, economic stress, and we dealt with this in the unemployment legislation that we passed, but here is my concern as it relates to my particular congressional district.

My concern is public hospitals and the lack of increased funding for Medicaid. I believe it is important to put on the RECORD that we are seeing increased numbers of individuals going to our public hospitals because they have no insurance, they have no alternatives. They are utilizing Medicaid. Some of that obviously has an enormous shortfall, and so the burden is falling upon my local county government.

The longer we stay in this condition, without the actual passing of appropriations bills, the longer we put the burden on the States, the longer we put the burden on local government.

So I just argue that we can pass this CR to the 31st, we passed the other one to the 31st, but all the issues we are concerned about, funding for HIV-AIDS, increased funding for Medicaid, funding Leave No Child Behind, all of that falls, if you will, around our feet and people are suffering. I am just hoping that we will have an opportunity to work in a bipartisan manner on the crisis that is going on in our districts, and we will come to a point where we recognize that we have got to address the needs of working people, but we have also got to address the needs of uninsured and impoverished who need this government to work on their behalf.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) very kindly for his time.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I just ask for a yes vote on this resolution, and I yield back my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

The joint resolution is considered read for amendment, and pursuant to House Resolution 15, the previous question is ordered.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the joint resolution.

The joint resolution was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain requests for special orders without prejudice to regular business.

GRANTING MEMBERS OF HOUSE PRIVILEGE TO EXTEND REMARKS AND INCLUDE EXTRANEOUS MATERIAL IN CONGRESSIONAL RECORD FOR FIRST SESSION OF 108TH CONGRESS

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that for the first session of the 108th Congress all Members be permitted to extend their remarks and to include extraneous material within the permitted limit in that section of the RECORD entitled "Extensions of Remarks."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

ENERGY INDEPENDENCE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, of course our Nation is on the verge of war, a war against what is called terrorism. It is interesting to think about that word. It is kind of a nebulous term. The enemy moves around the world. I think it is important to take a look at what is happening here at home and to think about who it was that crashed into those trade towers and where they originated from and what might have propelled the hatred that was directed against the people of our country on our home soil.

It is very interesting that the majority of hijackers came from the nation of Saudi Arabia. We look at where they came from, where they were educated and what their motives really were. It is interesting that Saudi Arabia remains the country from which the United States is importing the greatest share of petroleum, and if we look at the balance of accounts today, the primary area in which we have yielded a trade deficit with the world is in imported petroleum.

Oil prices are going up over \$33 a barrel. Every time we go to the gas pump and we buy a gallon, over half of what we spend goes to countries like Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iraq, Venezuela, Nigeria. It is very clear what has been happening. In fact, the current recession we are in, starting in March 2001, was triggered by rising oil prices, and in fact, rising prices at the pump are driving us into deeper recession every day.

When will America see who is controlling the innards of this economy and how where we are importing this oil from is affecting the politics of the world?

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Today, I have introduced a bill that will create a biofuels independence initiative for our country. It is time for America to erase our key strategic vulnerability, and that is to imported petroleum and the evil politics that it yields globally.

America has not been serious. Over the decade of the 1980s and 1990s, in spite of four recessions and major oil embargoes, we have continued to import more and more petroleum, which by the year 2050 will indeed be a scarce world resource. Armed forces from throughout the United States have been building air fields in the Middle East. We are being asked to appropriate over \$100 billion to defend the Occidental pipeline in the nation of Colombia. And Venezuela teeters as we sit here this evening.

It is time to pay attention to where the oil comes from, and it is time to do something here at home to revive the sagging and critical state of rural America and, at the same time, create jobs from coast to coast.

One of the most important and neglected areas that we can do something about, if we are serious, is to create the kind of umbrella across our country, as we did with the National Rural Electrification Administration and the National Telephone Administration. We can do the same with the National Biofuels Corporation, so that from coast to coast, where acres can be turned to productive use and move farmers from farming for a government check by going to their mailbox, to farming the marketplace and producing new, renewable clean fuels for America, we will have a win-win-win across every State in this Union.

There are other answers to our energy crisis: cleaning up coal in the Coal Belt that lies between Pennsylvania and Illinois, which has more Btus under the ground than the entire Middle East. Why can we not see it? Why can we not, a Nation that can clean up chemical weapons in Pine Bluff, not find a way to clean up coal? We are not serious.

The bill that we are introducing today says America is long overdue from sending her Marines around the world in special forces to protect the oil highways over the seas. It is time to produce our way to energy independence and create real growth inside this economy.

It should be interesting also for people to know that with every billion dollars of trade deficit that we rack up, that we cannot pay for here at home because of our imports, we have to bond our indebtedness. Today, the United States of America is in hock to about 12 nations around the world, including those very same oil kingdoms, but also nations like China. Not exactly a democratic state.

So I say, think about it, America. Take a look at our Energy Independence Act, H.R. 103. Think about making America energy independent in 10