

In addition to high prices, gas stations in some areas have run out of fuel all together. It is vital that we take every possible step to ensure that the gasoline market is priced fairly and it is important that we take steps to increase the supply of gasoline available to the market.

This week in my district I highlighted a 5-point plan to reduce the price of fuel. These steps include:

1. Take tough action against price gougers.
2. Waive boutique fuel requirements so that supply can be easily transferred between regions of the country.
3. Temporarily waive the 2.5 percent and 54 cent per gallon tax on ethanol so that imported ethanol can help make up the difference with the recent phase-out of MTBE in our gasoline supply.
4. Make use of coal—West Virginia's natural resource—as part of our fuel supply. Coal liquefaction technology has been available for many years and our government has invested in research that would allow for fuel to be produced now. Our nation has a 250-year supply of coal that already provides over half of our nation's electricity. Coal is an answer to the gasoline problem as well.

5. Allow for responsible drilling in ANWR and the Outer Continental Shelf to increase our domestic supply of crude oil.

I am pleased that the House took action today on two elements of this important plan. I strongly support H.R. 5253, passed by the House today that will punish price gougers with tough fines or jail time. Provisions of the bill will allow for enforcement by either the Federal Trade Commission or state Attorney Generals to provide the maximum possible protection for consumers. We must investigate and punish instances of gouging wherever they occur on the energy supply chain.

I am extremely disappointed that the House did not take action today on H.R. 5254 to improve the permitting and approval process for new refineries. Our nation has not built a new refinery since 1976 and it is clear that the regulatory process is a major reason why. This improved permitting process would also have been applied to coal liquefaction facilities—another step that should be taken to increase our fuel supply. Once again opponents of increased fuel supplies and lower prices blocked action on common sense energy solutions.

Passage of price gouging legislation is a positive first step. I urge my colleagues to support further legislation to increase supply by allowing new domestic exploration and waiving tariffs and boutique fuels.

#### CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT ON VOLUNTARY PRAYER

### HON. NICK J. RAHALL II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 4, 2006*

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, today is a significant day for me, the people of West Virginia and the Nation. Today we commemorate the National Day of Prayer.

As a people of faith, we know that prayer is a powerful instrument. And as one Nation under God, we know that many times our most powerful tool is prayer.

With that in mind and in celebration of National Prayer Day, today I have proposed in

the House of Representatives a Constitutional Amendment that would restore voluntary prayer in our Nation's schools.

West Virginia's senior Senator, ROBERT C. BYRD, introduced identical legislation in the United States Senate last week.

I believe that the Framers of the Constitution made their intent clear when they wrote the First Amendment. I believe they wanted to keep the new government from endorsing one religion over another, not erase the public consciousness or common faith.

For hundreds of millions of Americans who believe in God, prayer is our bridge between Earth and Heaven, our way of opening our hearts to the Lord. Through this intimate relationship we find peace and guidance. It is as important to us, as Christians, as the air we breathe, the water we drink, the food we eat. It nourishes our souls and makes us strong.

Nothing in this Constitution, including any amendment to the Constitution, shall be construed to prohibit voluntary prayer or require prayer in school, or to prohibit voluntary prayer or require prayer at a public school extra-curricular activity. Nor does this resolution alter the language of the First Amendment.

The Constitutional Amendment I am introducing today simply clarifies our right, and the right of our children in school, to bow our heads and give thanks for our bountiful blessings, to begin the day as many of us do—with the comfort of prayer. It is a right that is protected by both the Free Speech and Free Exercise Clauses of our Constitution.

Today, during the National Day of Prayer, I am reminded of the verse in Second Chronicles that reads, "If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land."

Today we thank God for all the blessings He has bestowed upon this great Country and ask Him to continue to heal our land and meet our needs—and we do so through the power of prayer.

#### CELEBRATING THE BIRTH OF JOSHUA BEN TELLER

### HON. MIKE PENCE

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 4, 2006*

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, today, I am happy to congratulate Paul and Maxine Teller of Washington, D.C., on the birth of their son. Joshua Ben Teller was born this morning, May 4th, 2006, at 8:31 a.m., weighing 6 pounds, 11 ounces, and measures 19 inches long. Joshua is blessed to have been born into a loving home, with wonderful parents, and his birth is a blessing to our Nation.

#### THE TESTIMONY OF PENELOPE A. GROSS

### HON. TOM DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 4, 2006*

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, the Chesapeake Bay is one of our region's

greatest assets. Keeping the Bay clean is a major priority for the state and local governments.

Our colleague Wayne Gilchrist recently held a hearing on the status of the Bay. One of the participants in that hearing was Supervisor Penelope Gross from Fairfax County, Virginia. I would like to enter into the RECORD her thoughtful comments presented at that hearing. Supervisor Gross has long been an advocate for Bay restoration and her testimony reflects how local governments can be critical partners in that effort.

#### WATER RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT SUBCOMMITTEE HOUSE TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

MAY 4, 2006.—Good morning, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for the opportunity to appear today to discuss Chesapeake Bay restoration activities and the vitally important role of local governments in those efforts. I am honored to be invited to provide testimony. Chesapeake Bay issues are of particular interest to me, which is why I serve on the Chesapeake Bay Policy Committee of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, was a member of the Chesapeake Bay Program's Blue Ribbon Financing Panel and recently was elected Chair of the Bay Program's Local Government Advisory Committee, also known as LGAC. I also chair Virginia's Potomac Watershed Roundtable, and I represent the Mason District on the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. As you may know, Fairfax County is one of the largest jurisdictions, population-wise, in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Each of these responsibilities has helped shape my perspective on what is needed to keep our efforts to achieve a clean Bay on track. I would like to share several themes that are the basis of my remarks today:

Implementation and restoration happen primarily at the local level and we need more state and federal funding to get the job done; EPA and their state counterparts need to provide stronger leadership on regulatory issues that will drive much of the multi-billion dollar Bay cleanup effort; a more focused approach to enforcement of existing federal laws, regulations, and policies by EPA to the state would alone make significant strides to clean up the Bay.

The Chesapeake Bay Program partners need to set clear implementation priorities, emphasizing those measures that offer the greatest pollution reduction return on investment;

The implementation and funding burden must be shared equitably between and among sectors and levels of government.

Of the 98 commitments in the Chesapeake 2000 Agreement, 22 specifically involve local governments, and other commitments imply local government involvement. And I want to remind you that there are more than 1,650 local governments throughout the 64,000 square mile Chesapeake Bay Watershed. From a local government perspective, we know what to do to continue making progress, but we need more help from our state and federal partners. The Bay Program has successfully generated plans and documents that outline what actions local governments should take to help restore the Bay. However, I believe we're heavy on written plans, and we're struggling on the follow-through—i.e., technical and financial assistance to get more done. This was the most common and strongly voiced concern