

taxpayers will go from a 10 percent tax bracket to a 15 percent tax bracket if we don't act.

The American people need to be aware of this. And in less than 4 years, if they don't communicate to their Members of Congress that they want to see these tax cuts extended, their voices need to be heard.

Mr. CONAWAY. I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania who is the chairman of the Countdown Crew where we come in weekly and talk about tax policy.

There is nothing magical about tax policy. There is nothing sacred about it. There are various terms and provisions. We ought to be about trying to find an efficient tax collection scheme that allows for voluntary compliance, a scheme that is easy to comply with and costs the least amount of money possible to comply with, but raises the minimum amount of money needed to fund the Federal Government.

The policy we have in place is incredibly complicated. I am a CPA, and I have spent 32-plus years in business, both complying with the tax law and trying to help other folks comply with the tax law. It is unnecessarily complicated, but it is the one we have got. The provisions we have, as has been mentioned tonight, the current rate on capital gains tax, the current rate on interest, the 179 deduction, the various marginal tax rates, all of those, while there is nothing cast in concrete or stone about that, nevertheless if you look at the results we have had since they were implemented in 2001 and 2003, this economy has grown with those tax policies in place.

Could the economy have grown with other tax policies in place? Certainly, but that would be a guess as to whether or not that happened. The truth is we know these were in place and we know what happened with respect to the economy since they have been in place, since they brought us out of the recession of 2000–2001.

GEOFF mentioned his taxpayer that he talks about. The guy I think about when we talk about raising taxes is a fellow working morning tour for a drilling rig company, probably the derrick man. He probably has the most exciting job on a drilling rig. Most drilling rigs of any substance have 15 to 30-foot substructure from the ground to the floor of the rig, and then they have a mast on top of that of something in excess of 100 feet. And the derrick man's job is to stand at about 90-plus feet above the substructure, so he is 120 feet in the air, and works. It is hard work. It is physically demanding and dangerous work. He is making good money. He works 8 hours and if he is lucky some weeks he gets overtime.

That is how he feeds his, and I say "he," most of them are men, that is how he feeds his family. When we talk about raising taxes on individuals, I don't think about Bill Gates or Warren Buffett. I think about that guy working morning tour, for example, for

Parker Drilling, or Patterson Drilling which is based in Snyder, Texas, who comes to work at 11 at night and works until 7 in the morning, and gets in a car with the other four guys on the crew and they drive home and he sleeps during the day. That is how he feeds his family. That work is 7 days a week for the most part. It is a hard job.

That is who I think about when we talk about raising taxes.

So we will be coming back here again next week on the first night back to highlight again. We will have peeled off another 7 days that we have before the automatic tax increase. We have a good colleague who gets all over us about mandatory spending. Well, this is a mandatory tax increase headed our direction, as our colleague from Pennsylvania said, if we simply run out the clock.

It will have been 18 days at that point in time since the last tax increase. We are not aware of any tax increases on the floor this week. But hang onto your wallet. Given the way so far our colleagues have run the shop, you don't get a lot of heads up on this stuff. It just comes to the floor. They could have something up their sleeve as part of the CR that would raise taxes and do all kinds of things. And I don't want to taunt them, but again not going through committee and doing regular order leads to the kind of blindsided unexpectedness where that can happen.

It has been 11 days since the first tax increase, and others are on the way.

I want to thank my colleagues from Pennsylvania, Georgia and Kentucky, and also from Oklahoma, for helping us out tonight.

REVOLUTIONIZING AMERICA'S ENERGY POLICY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor this evening to continue the effort to revolutionize American energy. We had the first breakthrough here just about a week and a half ago where the U.S. House of Representatives took the first step in the clean energy revolution.

I think it was long overdue, and I think it is going to be much enjoyed by Americans, because what we did about a week and a half ago was take the first step toward freeing ourselves from the shackles of oil and gas and in fact starting down the road toward clean energy with a high-tech clean energy future.

The way we did that, we reeled back in \$14 billion of giveaways to the oil and gas industry, the most profitable industry in the history of the solar system, that had been given under the previous Congress; and we put that money

for Americans to use to develop a clean energy future that can depend upon Midwestern farmers rather than Middle Eastern sheiks.

This really was a first step on a long road toward a clean energy future for America. It was a very, very important first step.

This evening I wanted to share with my colleagues some folks I have met whose lives are intertwined with that clean energy future.

We call the clean energy future the new Apollo Project because we believe we need a new high-tech energy future for this country every bit as bold and revolutionary and visionary as John Kennedy's original Apollo Project when he stood behind me in 1961 and said America was going to place a man on the Moon and bring him back safely in 10 years, and that happened.

We believe that we need that same spirit, that same idea that our genius, our innovation and inventiveness in America can create new technologies to provide us new energy.

The people I wanted to talk about tonight are all people I have met in the last month and are people who I believe exhibit why we need the new Apollo energy project and why it was a good idea for Congress to have created this clean energy fund, take money out of oil and gas and put it into clean energy. I would like to talk about some of those folks.

The first two people I want to talk about are exhibits A and B as to why we need a new clean energy future.

One is President Note of the Marshall Islands who is a gracious fellow. I met him on Bainbridge Island awhile back.

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When I talked to him, he told me about the plight of his Nation, the Marshall Islands in the southern Pacific, very, very low atolls. They are essentially coral reefs, and they are just a few feet above sea level. What the President of the Marshall Islands told me is that his Nation is now threatened by sea level rises associated with global warming, together with the coral reefs that can be occasioned by acidification in the ocean and increasing water temperature, again because of global warming and carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

What President Note told me is that, for the last year or so, they have had to take emergency provisions to keep the sea from encroaching where they live, essentially. They are now starting to have active consideration of where folks will have to go after they leave the Marshall Islands when the seas swallow the Marshall Islands or make them uninhabitable.

Another problem they are having is the storms are increasing in severity as well.

So here we have the President of a nation state who was in Seattle this weekend pleading for us to take measures to stop global warming to try to preserve his nation. I thought this

could be the first nation really destroyed by environmental catastrophe associated with an energy policy that is polluting the atmosphere with so much carbon dioxide.

President Note was pretty convincing that as an act of humanity we should not allow his nation to drown, and to me it was sort of a common-sense, human thing to do, to ask me to talk to my colleagues about what we could do about that, and so I am here tonight.

The second person I want to talk about is the director of relocation for a town called Shishmareff, which is a town on the northern coast of Alaska. This is a town that has been there for 4,000 years in some village system or otherwise. For 4,000 years, people have enjoyed living there, but now they are being swallowed by the sea. The Arctic Ocean is essentially intruding into the town.

If you go and google Shishmareff, Alaska, you will see pictures of the houses simply falling down into the ocean. For a combination of reasons, the tundra is melting underneath their houses, and the ocean is intruding because an ice barrier that formerly protected their village has melted. So they are both having the tundra melt underneath them and the storm waves coming in and washing away the town.

About 3 weeks ago, the town voted to move 13 miles, move the whole town, kit and caboodle, to the mainland. They are now on a coastal barrier island, and this will be the first town, Shishmareff, Alaska, the first town that falls victim to global warming in the United States, the first American town.

I cannot be thinking that that is something to be proud of, that we have an energy policy that allows the oil and gas industry and others to put untold amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. It is actually destroying an American town.

I think we ought to rally to the idea that we do not allow American towns to be swallowed by a problem. We have got to solve the problem.

So there are two people, the President of the Marshall Islands and the leader of Shishmareff, Alaska, both of whom are having their communities literally being swallowed up and having to move at some point because we have an energy policy that is fit for the 19th century, not the 21st century.

That is the bad news, but now I want to shift to some people I have met who have given me a huge amount of confidence that we can deal with this problem. Because I think if you spend time talking to the scientists and the inventors and innovators, as I have during the last year, you would be convinced that Americans, the country that had people who invented the light bulb, the jet airplane, went to the moon, perfected the Internet and mapped the human genome, are capable of creating a new energy future that will not allow the destruction of other American

towns. The reason I believe that is because I know these people. I just want to share some of the people I have met in the last month.

Last Friday, I met people from a company called General Compression, and these are scientists who have invented a way to make a compressor about 80 percent more efficient which does not sound too thrilling, I suppose, until you think what it can do. Because what they can do with this compressor is put it on the top of a wind turbine and use the wind turbine that blows in the wind to compress air and then take that air and can pump it down into subterranean caverns and keep stored air under high pressure that then can be vented and used like a big battery. When you vent this compressed air, it can drive a turbine and generate electricity.

Now, the upshot of all this technology is it means that we can take wind turbines and essentially connect them to a giant battery in the form of compressed air to store that energy. This is very, very important in the effort to have clean energy because now we can make wind turbines part of the grid. We can have energy that wind turbines create. We can have access to it even when the wind does not blow. Wind does not always blow, except here in the House of Representatives, of course.

So this, for the first time, when this technology is perfected, and it is not perfect yet, will be able to perhaps double the revenues that can be generated from wind turbines, a clean energy source that does not emit one pound of carbon dioxide when we generate that electricity.

So here is a tremendous breakthrough that could make radical changes in our energy policy by perhaps doubling the efficacy, at least the revenue generation of wind turbine farms. We have had a bunch of them go up in the State of Washington. We have the largest wind turbine farm in North America in the State of Washington, which is already as cheap as any other type of energy that we have. So there is one company.

The second company, the day before I had in my office a company called A123 Battery. It is a company in Massachusetts, scientists who have spun off of MIT, largely; and A123 Battery company is a company that has developed a lithium ion battery which has tremendous capacity essentially for storing electricity. They have now signed an agreement with General Motors in an effort to provide the battery for the Volt, the first plug-in hybrid that GM has announced they would like to build in several years.

A123 Battery company, it is exciting because their technology, once it becomes commercialized, once it becomes packaged in a reliable source that we can make sure we can put in our car, will allow us to have plug-in hybrids, a car that we can take home at night, plug into a garage outlet, next day

drive it up to 40 miles on electricity. And over 60 percent of our trips are under 40 miles a day, but if you want to go over 40 miles a day, then you have an auxiliary internal combustion engine that will burn either gasoline or ethanol that can take you the rest of the mileage as far as you want to drive.

So it is a plug-in, flex-fuel hybrid vehicle. Plug-in meaning you plug in at night, flex-fuel meaning runs on a gasoline or ethanol, and hybrid means it has electric and internal combustion engine.

So this company now has sort of answered the \$64,000 question of how we are going to have enough battery capacity; and all they need to do, as they explained to me, is to mount some engineering. The science is there. Now they need the engineering.

This is very exciting to think that in 5, maybe 6, 7 years, we will be able to have an electrical driven car, by and large, that we can distribute energy over the electrical system.

Think about when you put those two companies I just talked about, put those two companies together. General Compression, which can perhaps double the efficacy of the wind turbine, that can generate electricity that goes out over the wires to your garage, that you plug in your car at night and drive off and get 40 miles on electricity and unlimited mileage on your gas or ethanol, a clean system, with zero carbon dioxide emissions. There is some pretty good news, and they are not the only one.

Now maybe we will not have wind turbine-driven electricity. Maybe we will have clean coal. You know, most of the energy is from coal, from electricity right now in the United States, and it is very dirty, huge gigatons of carbon dioxide which are responsible for global warming, but there may be a way we can burn it cleanly.

We can put it through a combined cycle process that can take the carbon dioxide out of the stream. We turn the coal into hydrogen. We burn the hydrogen in a gas turbine, and that generates electricity. But we have got to have some place to put the carbon dioxide so it does not get in the atmosphere. We basically sequester it, and we pump it under high pressure into the ground, and it stays there for hundreds of years, but it takes a lot of energy to compress that CO₂. For every two coal-fired plants, you have to have one just for the energy to suppress this CO₂.

But a company I talked to yesterday called RAMGEN in Tacoma, Washington, RAMGEN has a nascent technology using a very sophisticated technology to increase the efficiency of compressors by very significant amounts, which would allow us to compress this carbon dioxide and use much less electricity to do it.

So here we have a situation where we have these three companies I just talked about that may mean we would be able to have affordable, clean coal

electricity to go into our electrical grid to power our plug-ins; and, if not that, then we have wind turbine technology to power our plug-ins with a battery that works.

That is a beautifully elegant system that can keep the Shishmareff towns and the Marshall Islands that are being swallowed by the sea and keep us having cars that do not have to drive on oil from the Middle East. That is a pretty nice system. So there is a lot of great news out there, because there is a lot of great innovation out there.

But the question is, what can we here in Congress do to accelerate that rate and that pace of innovation, and this is the third thing I would like to address tonight. We have talked about the problem. We have talked about the people who are solving it, innovation, but we have a role here, too, to help accelerate that rate of innovation.

I would like tonight to talk about some of the things, not all of the things, but some of the things we can do here in Congress.

First, what we can do is try to accelerate the rate of the commercialization of this plug-in hybrid battery. It is still going to take some engineering to make sure the battery is put in sequence in a crash-worthy system.

We can pass a bill I introduced last week with some colleagues called the grid plug-in hybrid vehicle bill that will use some of this \$14 billion that we have set aside for research that will help this industrial application get off the ground. It would also provide incentives for consumers to buy these products so we can help increase the demand for them; and, of course, we know once we increase demand, the cost of these goes down, the more we have on the road.

The bill would also create a Federal testing ground. We have several of these now that help prove the concept of these—that prove these concepts work, and we would build on that by providing another test facility to certify the safety and reliability of these systems.

So here is one bill that can help speed this transition to an electrical driven car, and we are very close to doing it. It may happen without Federal action, later rather than sooner, but we cannot wait. We cannot wait because of our dependence on foreign oil, and we cannot wait as the scientific panel will come out with its report this Friday again noting the danger we face as a country as a result of global warming.

So that is one thing we can do, pass this plug-in, flex-fuel hybrid vehicle bill.

Secondly, what we can do is make it easier for people to generate their own electricity. You know, photovoltaic energy where you put solar cells on your roof is becoming close to being market-driven. There are some very, very exciting things going on in photovoltaic energy right now.

A company in California called NanoSolar is producing 450 megawatts

of thin cell solar cells which they hope will decrease the cost of photovoltaic cells dramatically, another company called MiaSole. But we want to make it easier for you. If you want to put it on your roof, when you generate more electricity, you are feeding it back into the grid, to basically—to sell electricity you grow at your home, home-grown electricity back to the utility company.

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We want to make sure that you can get paid for that. So we have another bill called the net metering bill. Net metering basically means that you net on your meter what you used from the utility against what you produce and sell back to the utility.

This bill would create a right for you as a consumer, under certain rules that were set up, to sell your electricity back to your utility, make sure you can hook up, have a Federal standard to do that. That is the key to being able to get to what we call a distributed generation system, where we can have generators all around the country, including on our rooftops and our businesses and our homes, not just in large coal plants and large hydro-electric dams.

This is a pretty simple thing to do. It has been blocked now for 4 years in Congress. We are hoping that it can get through this year, a simple thing to do.

Third, we have got to increase our research and development in all of these high-tech energy fields. I just mentioned several of them. There are many others, wave power. We now have the first wave power plant that has been proposed off the coast of Oregon, 50 megawatts, with buoys that bob up and down underneath the surface that can generate very considerable electricity. There is enough electricity that could be generated off a 10-by-10 square mile area off the coast of California that, if the buoys can be shown to survive ocean conditions, can have all the electricity California could use. It is pretty amazing.

Now, there are hurdles to show that these buoys can survive in the wave power, but we need to do more in the wave conditions. We need to do more R&D on this. We need more R on the clean coal. We need more R&D on the solar thermal, which we are having great success with lately.

The reason we know this is because when we compare this to other major challenges, we are really pathetic. We are pathetic when it comes to doing R&D and energy right now.

You know, this challenge we have is at least as visionary as going to the Moon, but it affects our planet rather than the Moon. Yet we are spending one-seventh of what was spent and invested in the new Apollo Project, one-seventh per year what we spent on getting to the Moon.

That is a sad commentary on our failure to act with dispatch when it comes to energy. We would not have

gotten to the Moon, probably ever, had we had such a skimpy, weak, pathetic amount of research into this basic science. We have all this explosion of information going on between nanotechnology and biofuels, which we haven't even yet talked about tonight. We have got to ramp up that Federal R&D. That is the third thing we need to do.

Fourth, we need to have major steps forward to advance our biofuels potential in this country. We have enormous potential in this country for biofuels. I have read the last few days some articles and newspapers by pundits who get to say anything they want. They don't ever have to run for election, so it doesn't matter what it is, really, I suppose.

But these pundits have suggested that biofuels could not play an important part of our role, and those people are not talking to the scientists who recognize the breakthrough technology that we are on the cusp of enjoying in this country to dramatically increase the productivity of biofuels. Now, we know we are already producing very significant sums of ethanol and some biodiesel in this country. We know that that can increase.

But what folks don't understand is that these biofuels, we are ready to take giant leaps forward to leapfrog the corn ethanol that we now use, and corn ethanol right now is what we might think of as the first-generation biofuel. It is kind of like the Wright brothers' flier. It works, you can fly, but it is just a start. We are going to enjoy succeeding generations of biofuels.

The first one that we will have will be cellulosic ethanol. Cellulosic ethanol is a fancy term that basically means instead of just using the seed of a plant to distill ethanol, you use the whole plant. You don't just use a kernel of the corn. You use everything, what they call the corn stover that grows above the ground. You mash it up, and you put an enzyme in it to break down the carbohydrates in the cell, then you distill the carbohydrates and you make ethanol.

When we do this, we will increase the productivity of the Midwestern farmer by a factor of two or three, not 5 or 10 percent, but by a factor of two or three. We will generate two or three times as much energy and money per acre as we are generating right now. This technology is ready for the first commercial plant, which should be in Idaho, a company called Iogen, that is ready as soon as they get a loan guarantee from Uncle Sam so they can build the first commercial plant to do this.

When we do this, we will be able to have a very significant amount of our transportation fueled by domestically produced biofuel. This is not me just saying this. This is the Department of Energy that has done extensive analyses of this, Department of Agriculture, a whole suite of agronomists

who have looked at it, who have basically concluded that in 25 years we can have 25 to 30 percent of our transportation fuels fueled by this, by this stream of domestically produced ethanol.

That is just a beginning. That is a second generation. A third generation could include algae. Algae has the capability of producing 50 times as much at least per acre as even the second generation of biofuels.

There is at least one company that has at least one commercial application of that technology now, basically to make diesel fuel out of algae. That is the kind of thing we need to invest in, and that is what we need to start doing.

Last, I want to mention something that is pivotal to driving these technologies, and that is the technologies that I have talked about tonight all operate under an enormous competitive disadvantage. They have to compete with other industries that have a huge subsidy that they don't get, and that's the subsidy that the fossil fuel industry has because they get to put their carbon dioxide, their pollution, in the atmosphere for free.

Now, you think about that. If a coal-fired utility right now can put its garbage, its pollution, its carbon dioxide, its pollutant that is damaging the Earth's atmosphere, that is damaging the atmosphere by the megaton and not pay a dime for it, in unlimited amounts, now, compared to what you do and what we do when we go to our county garbage dump with a pickup full of stuff out of our garden, goodness knows what we have got in the back of our basements, we have to pay money to dump our stuff in a limited space, because there is only a limited space in a garbage dump.

But utilities that put all this pollution in our atmosphere, which has limited carrying capacity for carbon dioxide, get to do it for free for as much as they want. That is a huge subsidy of those industries.

If you are a small company in California building solar cells or ocean-powered technology or wind turbines, or if you are a farmer in Ohio that is going to build cellulosic ethanol and sell it, you don't get that subsidy. It is an unfair subsidy, and it needs to stop.

The U.S. Congress needs to stand up on our hind legs and pass a cap and trade system to cap, to limit, to put a ceiling on the amount of carbon dioxide that can go in our atmosphere from these polluting industries. When we have that cap, when we limit the amount of carbon dioxide that can be put in, two things are going to happen.

We are going to protect our atmosphere for our grandchildren; and, second, we are going to give a boost to these new businesses that are really ready to start producing these products to become commercially available for the clean energy future of this country. That is a big two-fer, a clean, healthy environment and an energetic economy.

All of the things I have talked about tonight will help produce both things. This is a situation where we are going to have the cleanest policy in congressional history and the most robust economy in American history once we develop these new technologies, because we need to be the country that fulfills our destiny as being the inventors of the world.

You know, China is going to need this technology. They are building one dirty coal-fired plant a week, and they are going to need clean energy technology. We should be the one selling it to them.

Here is a great way to restore the imbalance of trade between us and China. One of these companies, the director of Ramgen, this company that may be able to do this clean coal technology, was going to China today, and here is a perfect example of how we can start to fix this terrible trade imbalance we have when we can be the sellers to the world to this clean energy technology.

So, in summary, there is some good news and bad news here tonight. The bad news is we have some fellow Americans whose talent is being destroyed by global warming in Shishmareff, Alaska.

We have a fellow citizen in the world, the Marshall Islands, whose country is being devoured by global warming. That is the bad news.

But the good news is we have a great combination of innovators, inventors, business people that are ready to tackle this problem and create these new technological solutions to this problem. One day we will be driving clean cars. We will have cleaner homes with better efficiency. We are going to lick this problem of global warming at the same time we are going to grow the U.S. economy.

That is a message that this Congress, I am proud to say, is now sending for the first time. We have broken the chains of the oil and gas industry. We have broken the chains of the 19th century, and we have entered a new century of clean energy technology.

I will look forward to more successes so we can help Americans continue to invent. It really is the American destiny to pass the new Apollo energy project and do just what John F. Kennedy did, take this country to a new vision.

30-SOMETHING WORKING GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to address the House once again. I just have come to the floor on behalf of the 30-something Working Group. As you know, and as the Members know, we work daily and weekly on issues that are facing the American people and also to not only inform Members of Congress but also allow the

American people to get a closer glimpse of what is happening here in the Capitol dome and what is not happening here under the dome.

I am proud to report that there were a couple of days, we only worked 3 days last week, or 4, to allow the minority party to have their retreat. During that time, Speaker PELOSI and a number of other chairmen traveled to Iraq and Afghanistan to visit our troops and also our commanders in the field.

I can share with you that the trip will be talked about a little further by the Speaker tomorrow, but it is very, very important because it is the number one thing that is facing the Nation right now, and that is war in Iraq and also in Afghanistan.

Last week we spoke or talked here on the floor about the importance of the President's State of the Union, what was said and what was not said. There was some level of focus on the fact that Katrina was not mentioned not one time during the President's State of the Union, with me being from a hurricane State and representing a district that is constantly hit by hurricanes and natural disasters, just being one season away. Katrina, noted as one of the worst natural disasters of our time and one of the worst responses by this Federal Government, did not receive even a mention from the President of the United States.

I can say that there are several Members here in Congress that continue to be concerned about Katrina and the area of housing and follow-through and preparedness on behalf of our first emergency responders, or that they have the tools to respond, but making sure that FEMA has the proper oversight to be able to carry out the tasks needed in the event of a natural disaster or terrorist attack.

One other thing I think is important to be able to identify is veterans were not pointed out in this State of the Union. Looking at Katrina and the State of the Union, we must come to grips with there are two hard realities. One, if we have a natural disaster or a planned terrorist attack that takes place in this country, is the Federal Government ready to respond, especially on behalf of the executive branch? That question is still left unanswered.

At the same time, when we start looking at issues of veterans, looking at our troops, our men and women coming home, what will be the state of affairs on behalf of those veterans?

I am saying all of this to line up the debate that is going to take place after this week when we pass the continuing resolution that will be on the floor on Wednesday of this week, of what is going to happen the following week after that when the President sends his budget to Congress.

It is important within that budget to embrace some of the values of the American people and even legislation that we have filed in the 110th Congress and also that was filed in the 109th Congress.