

the GI Bill, giving educational benefits to troops. I have no idea why the President has decided to exercise his veto threat against that legislation. If there's anything that we should be able to come together on, it's on supporting our troops when they come back home.

I think we should have done it for those 4 million kids that should have gotten health care insurance. I think that we should have done it when it comes to the withdrawal of our troops from Iraq. But let's at least do it as one final salvo with this Democratic Congress and a Republican President when it comes to standing up for our GIs, Mr. MEEK. It would seem to be the one place, amidst a lot of the times that we disagree here. You named all the moments on which we have agreed. But the culmination of a remarkable amount of agreement, amidst a reputation of disagreement in this House, would be to pass that GI Bill with a veto-proof majority, put it on the President's desk, dare him to veto it, knowing that we're going to have the votes to override when it comes back.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. You know, Mr. MURPHY, it's very interesting. As I speak to fact versus fiction, I can't help but think of our colleague who already, quote-unquote, has the Republican nomination, one of our friends over in the Senate. And he coined something, I think, earlier this week or last week as the slogan for the forward campaign on the Republican side. Change that you Deserve.

Okay. Well, I would say to my Republican colleagues that have decided to follow the leadership, the elected leadership that they have now on the Republican side that are saying stay the course, follow the President, object, what have you. Change that you deserve, I think, is something that one should think about.

Case in point. I'm not a lawyer. I don't play one on television.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. I'm a lawyer, Mr. MEEK, so if you need some help I'll walk you through it.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. That's fine. My wife's a lawyer too, so I'm kind to lawyers. But let me just say, you remember the letter that the Republican leadership wrote to the Speaker?

I don't want you to pay attention over here, I just want you to pay attention over here. The Republican leadership wrote a letter saying, you said you were going to do something about gas prices. We're waiting you to do something about gas prices in America. And we're concerned about all of this, and you have not fulfilled your promise.

And I think that it's important. If we can, I want to put something here because I don't want to have that on the chart there.

Well, let me just for the case of keeping the 30-something piece together, because I don't want to get into names, I'm just going to do this because I don't like to like point out anything as it relates to an individual Member of Congress, even if they're leadership.

But I just want to say, as it relates to doing something about gas prices, these are all the measures that we've passed here in this House that the Republican leadership decided not to vote for. But they want to criticize, and they want to encourage their leaders, I mean, their caucus to vote against change and a new direction.

Now, even the Republican nominee on the Republican side has said change that you deserve. If things were going so well and the policy was so great, why do we have to talk about change that you deserve?

Why can't we say we'll keep doing the things that we've continued to do, and we'll continue to have the problems that we have now?

I'm just saying this to my Republican colleagues, because, not that, you know, many of them are friends of mine. But I'm saying, as it relates to the policy that we have to pass, that the American people need now—we're not here for political purposes. We're here because we want to move an agenda forward.

I think it's important when we look at OPEC price fixing. These are the Republican leaders, or down the leadership line, that voted against that. And when you look at the top individual, as it relates to influence within the caucus, voted no on every last measure that Democrats have put forth, price gouging, renewable energy, energy security.

Second person in charge voted for three of the four that we have put forth before this Congress. Signed the letter.

The third person in charge voted against price gouging and also renewable energy. Those are two votes of the four that have taken place.

The fourth person in charge voted for two measures, voted against it, renewable energy and also energy security, but I said it correctly, voted for two of the measures that we put forward.

The fifth person in charge voted no on every last measure. Signed the letter.

The sixth person in charge voted against every measure that we put forth to be able to give the American people a fighting chance in this whole issue of price gouging, this whole issue of no OPEC. And we call OPEC, these are oil producing companies for price fixing, countries for price fixing, renewable energy, energy security, voted against every last one of them.

On down to the bottom, voted three times against those measures and voted two times.

I said all of that to say that I think that some of these individuals that are influencing the minds of, or the vote of those individuals within the Republican caucus that don't want to be a part of the 177 bipartisan major votes, or don't want to be a part of the 125 votes that we've taken, plus 50 Republicans that have voted for it, I think that the argument, especially when we look at the individual that is, quote-unquote, running on the Republican

side for President of the United States, of saying change that you deserve, we speak fact in the 30-Something Working Group and we do not speak fiction.

If it was political, Mr. MURPHY, and I say this in closing, if it was political, we would be home right now, you know, relaxing past 11 o'clock at night.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Will the gentleman yield for 1 minute?

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Absolutely. You have the last word.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Your point is this, is that we've seen in the last 2 or 3 weeks, both the Republican minority and our Republican Presidential candidate all of a sudden start to use the word "change." Well, to them it's just a word. To them it's just a part of their slogan.

To the Democratic majority in the House and the Senate, it's what we live by, it's why we're here, it's why we get up in the morning, it's why I gave up my entire life to run for the United States Congress; it's why you have given up 18 hours a day to do this job, because we're here to change the place. It happens to be in everything that we talk about because it's the definition of why we're Members of Congress.

For the Republicans here in the House and the Republican Presidential candidate, it's just a word. And that's what I think the American people are beginning to understand. That's why the American people are turning out in record numbers for our Presidential candidates on the Democratic side, and that's why we have won the last three competitive seats for special elections here in the House, because the voters out there, the American public, are figuring out that change is nothing if it's just a word coming out of your mouth. You've got to live it. You've got to breathe it, which is what we're doing here, Mr. MEEK.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. MURPHY, I want to thank you for your comments. I couldn't say it better.

Mr. Speaker, in the spirit of bipartisanship, we're going to yield back our hour earlier so my good friend from Texas will be able to share with the Members of the House what he would like to share.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, we yield back the balance of our time.

FOOD FOR FUEL

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ALTMIRE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) is recognized from this moment until midnight.

Mr. BURGESS. I thank the Speaker, and I thank the Members on the Democratic side for yielding back their time early.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to do something a little different tonight. Normally I come down here to the floor of the House to talk about health care. But we've heard a lot recently about where this country is in regards to its

energy policy. We've heard a lot recently about the high cost of food and foodstuffs, and whether or not that has been related to this country's energy policy.

You can call it what you want. Call it Murphy's Law, Newton's Third Law, or just the plain old law of unintended consequences, but when a government as large as ours is, and I assure you, after being here for 5 years, it is an extremely large Federal Government; but when a government as large as ours mandates the use of anything, there will be downstream effects, downrange effects that sometimes you can't predict and certainly are beyond your control.

A case in point is the growing crisis of food versus fuel and the debate that rages in Congress.

Now, the early part of this month, the 5th of May, I hosted an event billed as Food vs. Fuel: Understanding the Unintended Consequences of United States Policy. I invited representatives from the farming community, food companies, consumers, domestic charities and the press in an attempt to get a 360-degree view of this issue.

Now, just for the record, I want to mention the names of the people who were kind enough to spend the morning with me earlier this month and whose opinions were represented at the round table. And it was a diversity of opinions. This was certainly not a one-sided debate.

We had Jon Doggett from the National Corn Growers Association, their Vice President of Public Policy. We had Scott Faber of the Grocery Manufacturers Association, the Vice President for Federal affairs of that group; Bob Young of the American Farm Bureau, their chief economist. Bob Young is a Ph.D economist. Candy Hill of Catholic Charities, who is a Senior Vice President for Social Policy and Government Affairs, primarily working in the domestic realm. And last but not least, Bob Davis, a reporter for the Wall Street Journal who's reported on a number of international economic issues over the years. And it was really Mr. DAVIS' reports in the Wall Street Journal that prompted my interest in this subject.

When we had assembled this panel of experts, I asked the experts, with the policy now of so much of our corn being turned into fuel, and with food shortages an inevitable result, are America's biofuel programs the cause or the effect?

Now this is kind of ironic because we just voted again on the farm bill today. But here's a poster that shows perhaps some of the consequences or the unintended consequences of putting corn in the gas tank and ignoring other needs, other uses that that ear of corn might go to.

Has Congress been fooled into a bad fuel policy at the expense of our national food supply?

I went into this round table with an open mind. We had a panel that was

really evenly distributed. Certainly there was no stacked deck against anyone or in favor of any one particular policy. And perhaps it's unique for a Member of Congress to not arrive at a conclusion until looking at the data.

So this food versus fuel matchup, is, in my opinion, another example of the law of unintended or unforeseen consequences. And, of course, the symptoms are all around us. They're impossible to deny. You turn on the TV, you click on your Internet, you read about the ever escalating cost of food prices, both domestically and across the globe, and the news is frequently paired with stories of shortages, heart rending stories of shortages, and the resulting unrest that food shortages cause abroad.

On April 14, the Wall Street Journal reported "surging commodity prices have pushed global food prices 83 percent upward in the last 3 years."

My hometown paper, the Fort Worth Star Telegram, the newspaper of the largest city in my district, on May 2 of this year, they had an opinion piece in the Star Telegram that discussed how the indirect cost of ethanol hurt Texans at the grocery store.

□ 2330

Mr. Speaker, just recently, according to the Bureau of Logic Or Statistics, between the beginning of March and the beginning of May when I held this hearing, a dozen eggs, the price was up 35 percent; a gallon of milk, the price was up 23 percent; a loaf of bread, the price was up 16 percent.

Now, we still need to eat and so Americans are getting creative in which groceries they purchase, and they're using grocery store coupons in record rates. In 2007 alone, consumers redeemed 1.8 billion coupons, an increase of over 100 billion coupons from the previous year. Now overall, the Department of Agriculture estimates that food prices will jump 4 to 5 percent this year.

Now, those price increases may seem modest, but for the poorest Americans who spend a greater portion of their family budgets on food, it is, in fact, becoming a tremendous burden.

Cherries across the country are being challenged by the rising food prices. It's more expensive to buy food. Donations are going down, and more people are then turning to charities for assistance.

So they've got a rising population that is coming in and asking for help, and their prices that they have to pay in order to provide that help is going up. And clearly those two are on unsustainable paths.

Catholic Charities USA, one of the largest social networks in helping almost 8 million people a year, has seen a 60-percent increase in people seeking food and nutrition services across the country since 2002. In 2006 alone, Catholic charities saw a 12-percent increase in the number of individuals seeking help in order to provide food for themselves and their families.

Rising food prices are not merely a domestic issue. They have international implications as well.

Let me share this poster, and this is from a recent Washington Post series called, The Global Food Crisis, which depicts the haves versus the have-nots in the industrial world versus developing countries. And this graphic reads, "North America helps feed the world supplying about half of the growable grain exports. People in developing countries spend up to 80 percent of their money on food. So when food prices rise sharply, partially as a result of supply changes in North America and other producing countries, the world's poor feel it the most right in the gut."

The results of tighter supplies are reverberating literally across the globe, and they do have dire consequences. In Haiti, the capital city of Port-au-Prince, rioters have taken to the streets to protest higher food prices. The violence has gotten so significant that in fact it resulted in a governmental change in that country. Similar unrest has erupted in Egypt, Cameroon, the Ivory Coast, Senegal, and Ethiopia.

May 5 was prior to the devastating events, the cyclone in Burma and the earthquake in China. I submit that all of these problems that were of significant proportion on May 5 of this year have now gotten that much larger because of the results of those twin catastrophes, and we're only just now about to enter into hurricane season in this country.

Robert Zoellick, the president of the World Bank, estimates that 33 countries are in danger of experiencing similar unrest as a result of food prices and food shortages. While food shortages hurt people the most, they also harm American policy. One of our greatest diplomatic strengths is through foreign aid. Last week, President Bush requested an additional \$770 million in emergency food assistance for poor countries responding to rising food prices that have caused social unrest in several nations.

So what is the conventional wisdom on higher grocery bills here at home and lower food stores at an international level?

In my previous life of as a physician, I was given to making diagnoses. My diagnosis in this situation, as a result of many experts saying that the United States' biofuel policy is to blame for increase in food prices and a decrease in food supplies; the argument then is that Federal mandates to produce more biofuels have, number one, diverted more crops from food to fuel, and two, increased the demand for crop building blocks like fertilizer, water, and transportation. And those inputs have increased the cost of biofuel costs like corn and soybeans and other nonbiofuel crops like rice and wheat as well.

The International Food Policy Research Institute suggests that biofuel production accounts for a quarter to a

third of the recent increases in global commodity prices. Within the United Nations, the Food and Agricultural Organization has predicted that biofuel production, assuming current mandates continue, will increase food costs by 10 to 15 percent. That's an important point: assuming current mandates continue an additional 10 to 15 percent, in addition to the 5 percent rise that we've already seen this year.

Well, let's talk a minute because there is some confusion on what is a biofuel.

If you Google "biofuel" on the Internet, you will find out the following: A biofuel is defined as a solid, liquid, or gas fuel containing or consisting of or derived from recently dead biological material, most commonly plants. This distinguishes it from fossil fuel which is derived from biological material that has long been dead—been dead a long time. And what are the building blocks of biofuel? Commodities like corn, soybeans, sugarcane, vegetable oil that can be used either as food or to make biofuels.

And probably the best or most well-known biofuel is, of course, ethanol. In the United States, the primary source of ethanol is from corn currently, 95 percent. Ethanol is a type of alcohol made by fermenting and distilling simple sugars. It's the same compound that's found in our alcoholic beverages, and its primary use in the United States, as a fuel, is as an additive to gasoline.

Now, the ethanol policy in this country goes back to the Arab oil embargoes of 1973 and 1979. Since that time, the production of fuel ethanol has been encouraged through the Federal tax incentives of ethanol-blended gasoline.

In 2005 when the Republicans were in control of Congress, the Energy Policy Act established a renewable fuel standard which mandated the use of ethanol. 7.5 billion gallons of renewable fuel must be blended with the Nation's gasoline by 2012.

But then last year right at the end of the year, Congress passed the Energy Independence and Security Act which increased this renewable fuel standard to require 36 billion gallons of biofuel additives for transportation fuels by 2022.

Now, according to the United States Department of Agriculture, 3.2 billion bushels of corn will be used to produce roughly 6 billion gallons of fuel ethanol during the current corn marketing year, September 2007 through the end of August of 2008.

Well, let's talk a little bit about corn because it is important.

This poster tells a little bit about two different types of corn: field corn and sweet corn. Field corn is the most—is what is mostly grown in America. It's primarily used to feed livestock and to produce ethanol. So field corn is used for fuel, and sweet corn is used for human consumption.

This graphic also explains to some degree how the field corn is used. The

pie chart there at the bottom shows a little less than half, about 47 percent of field corn, the type of corn used to produce ethanol, was used for animal feed; about a quarter, 24 percent, was used for ethanol; 19 percent was exported, and 10 percent was used for direct human consumption in various forms.

Now, those who believe biofuels are to blame for rising food prices argue that its fundamentally wrong to divert food meant for tables into gas tanks when there are those going hungry both here at home and abroad. Additionally, they argue that ethanol production is fighting off a potential environmental crisis and a potential dependence on foreign oil, but we face an actual crisis in food production in the United States.

Ethanol opponents also point to significant scientific research regarding the environmental impacts of ethanol production. And what are they? It's important to look at those environmental impacts.

Scientific research shows that the use of crop lands for biofuels actually increases greenhouse gasses through emissions from land-use change. Work by Tim Searchinger of the Georgetown Environmental Law and Policy Institute, which recently appeared in *Science* magazine, argues that the land-use change from forest to grassland to new cropland nearly doubles greenhouse grass emissions over 30 years and increases those greenhouse gasses for over 150 years.

The important innovation in this research is that prior studies would show a 20-percent savings in emissions neglect the impact of land-use change, and clearly the doctor's work shows that that is significant.

Now, as farmers respond to the rising demand for corn, they create new cropland, and they create that what? Out of grassland and forest. Plowing up more forest or grassland releases more of the carbon dioxide previously stored or more of carbon previously stored in plants and soils through decomposition and that which is burned when fields are cleared by burning.

Also, the loss of forests and grasslands prevents the plants from performing their own form of carbon sequestration in the stocks and leaves and roots of the plant.

Significant critiques have risen from this research. For example, Searchinger's work supposes that there's a constant yield per acre of corn, but if an acre of corn yield has increased over 300 percent since 1944, then new technologies have contributed to a 30 percent increase in the last decade. Research conducted by the National Academy of Sciences shows the biofuel mandates are contributing to air pollution, water pollution, and they do compound water shortages.

Now, on the other side, and we heard from the other side during this hearing, those who support the use of corn for ethanol. In terms of economic secu-

rity, ethanol supporters argue that the production of biofuels goes a long way in helping end our dependence on foreign oil. We can grow our own fuel here at home thus supporting our domestic economy. At the same time, we don't have to rely on rogue regimes in unstable parts of the world for the vast majority of our fuel needs which enhances our national security.

The rising prices of food aren't caused by biofuel mandates, per se. Growing demand in global markets, especially China and India, drive up the price. Additionally, they point out that shortages caused by bad weather in places like Australia, and in fact they point out that—people who support the use of biofuels point out that climate change may be to blame since certain areas of the world where grain was once grown no longer have the weather to support those types of crops.

Another issue that is often brought up is meat consumption in China has risen from 25 kilograms per person in 1995 to over 50 kilograms per person in 2007. On average, it takes 5 kilograms of grain to produce 1 kilogram of meat, while the demand for meat has grown 28 kilograms per person. The resulting demand for grain has increased by 7.8 billion bushels.

So with these two conflicting and opposing viewpoints, what do you think? Is it biofuels that are causing the high grocery prices, or is it just a result of natural forces within the world? And if the issue is that increased biofuels production is contributing to the high cost of food, what would be the answer? What would be the prescription for curing that ailment?

So certainly we're going to continue to provide hunger relief both here and at home. But we could look at freezing the renewable fuel standards and rolling back some biofuel mandates, certainly providing increased incentives to make breakthroughs on cellulosic ethanol so we won't be using our food to fuel our cars.

And that may be what is at the central part of this argument. As well intended as the policy was in 2005 when the Republican House of Representatives dictated renewable fuel standard, and as forward-thinking as it was in December of this past year when the Democratic House increased that renewable fuel standard, it all depended upon the advancement in technology.

□ 2345

We can't continue to turn this much foodstuff into fuel for our automobiles and trucks. We depend upon this policy, depend upon the advancement, the breakdown of the cellulose in the plant wall to make ethanol and not distilling of ethanol from the starch and sugars that are contained in the grain component.

Until we achieve that breakthrough of cellulosic ethanol, and I believe it will occur one day, but until that time occurs, it is almost not reasonable to

assume that we will be able to meet the country's growing transportation fuel demands through production of ethanol, certainly by diverting our foodstuff into that product.

Another thing that we could do, and this was a point that was so eloquently stated by Mr. Davis in the Wall Street Journal, we can change the way the United States handles its delivery of foreign aid, the commodity versus cash approach. The current approach is to buy excess United States production of grain and then deliver that product to the country where the crisis exists, but if we were to shift that approach and begin supporting local agriculture in developing Nations, it could break the cycle of dependence on foreign aid and break the cycle of hunger and famine.

I don't think there's any question at this point that we have to be looking at other sources. Now, we had a pretty interesting debate on the floor of this House this past week, and we heard the Democrats talk about that in their last hour. This was the debate about the temporary stoppage of filling what's known as the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. Now it's a small amount that would actually be put back in to increase supply in this country, but for the first time, for the first time, there appeared to be genuine, bilateral, bipartisan agreement that increasing supply was a way to positively affect fuel prices here in this country.

Every other debate that we've had, certainly since I've been in Congress, when it comes down to an issue of increasing supply, generally 90 percent of the people on my side of the aisle are in favor of it, and 90 percent of the people on the other side of the aisle are opposed. ANWR is perhaps the poster child for this, and we heard a great deal about that in the hour previous to the last hour when Mr. PETERSON from Pennsylvania talked about where we would be today had then-President Clinton not vetoed the provision that would have allowed drilling in ANWR in 1996, some 12 years ago.

We're told it would take 7 to 8 to 10 years to actually deliver finished product out of ANWR into the marketplace in this country. Well, guess what, if we had started that in 1996, we'd be using that oil today, and we wouldn't be feeling the repercussions in the price at the pump that we see today. There wouldn't be the pressure on diverting food into fuel if only we'd paid attention to supply.

But maybe that day is at hand. Again, we had broad bilateral commitment, broad bipartisan commitment, both sides of the aisle in this House that said temporarily we're going to stop filling the Strategic Petroleum Reserve because, my opinion at least, there was broad bipartisan agreement that increasing supply even just a little bit would be a positive effect on prices at the pump.

So how much more good could we do if we moved off that minuscule amount and looked at some of the other ways

to increase the supply? Now there's not a person in this Congress, I don't think, that feels that someday we're going to get a lot of our fuels from different sources than we see today, but right now, it's coal, it's natural gas, it's oil. That's what's available to drive our economy, and sure, we may want to pivot to a day where that energy production comes from somewhere else, but until we get there—and we are not there yet on cellulosic ethanol by a long shot, and if we turn all this stuff into ethanol for our cars, we have unintended consequences and unintended repercussions downrange and downstream that are quite severe.

So this Congress really needs to take a serious look at ways that we can increase supply because, again, apparently all agree that increasing supply is going to be a good thing as far as its effect on fuel prices in this country.

So maybe ANWR's too emotional. Maybe we can't do it. Maybe we just have to leave that one in the too-hard box for a little while, and I would say, okay, but bring us your ideas from the other side of the aisle. Let's not make it all about turning this stuff into something we can put in our automobiles. Let's make it about how do we deliver more usable energy for the American people, how do we maintain the American economy.

Is it going to be nuclear? We can talk about that. I'd love it if we talked about that. Is it going to be drilling on the Outer Continental Shelf as Mr. PETERSON outlined or in the Inter-mountain West, to the oil shales in Canada? The fact is, we've got reliable supplies of energy here at home, but we've put an embargo on American energy and that, quite frankly, just simply does not make any sense.

But it was a new day here in Congress this week when both sides, in a bipartisan fashion, said, by golly, increasing supply is going to be a good thing for the American energy consumer, and we're going to do that. And we only did a little bit by temporarily stopping filling the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, but maybe that new day has dawned and we're now going to have a meaningful discussion on where the common ground is, where we can meet in the middle and work on increasing that supply for the American people.

Because, quite honestly, until we get to the day of the promise of cellulosic ethanol, this is not going to be a formula for success, and in fact, unintended consequences of this behavior may have absolutely devastating and dire consequences around the world.

You know, the law of unintended consequences used to be that it took almost a generation for those unintended consequences to come home and to come back around and work their effect. But we're in a time now where the effect of unintended consequences can be felt very, very quickly.

We heard in the last hour the discussion about the reauthorization of high-

er education and student loans. Well, remember, we did something to student loans in September of last year. Then we had to turn around and undo it in April or May of this year because of the unintended consequences and the fact that we were driving up interest rates at the same time that availability of credit was coming down. And we were worried that no student loans were going to be available when this summer's crop of students went to apply for those loans in June, July and August.

Unintended consequences have a way of coming around extremely quickly, and the unintended consequences of increasing the renewable fuel standard that this Congress undertook in December of 2007 has very quickly come home and the repercussions and reverberations are being felt around the world, and it's leading to instability in governments in this hemisphere.

Is that something we want? We always talk about the world that we want to leave for our children. Is that the type of world we want to leave for our children where worldwide hunger and worldwide deprivation lead to instability in developing countries? I don't think so.

I think it is time that this Congress needs to take action. After all, part of this crisis is of our doing. We should understand, this Congress should understand, the leadership of this Congress should understand about unintended consequences.

Now a lot of people who serve in this House are politicians, and that's not a great surprise. And politicians have the urge to respond to public opinion and try to mold their policies to reflect public opinion. But we need to be careful when we respond like that. As policymakers, we have an obligation to enact, well, responsible policy. That's what we're sent here to do. We're sent here to find sensible solutions.

Now Congress can't control foreign demand. Congress, I don't think, can control the weather. There may be some in this body who feel that they can, but we can address the effect of unintended consequences of our biofuel policy which diverts a quarter of our national corn supply to ethanol production, a quarter, a quarter of our annual national corn supply to ethanol.

Congress and our President have nothing but good intentions—we care so deeply about people—nothing but good intentions in promoting the expansion of renewable fuels, but ethanol is not the energy security silver bullet that many people believe it to be.

Last year, we burned 24 percent of our national corn supply as fuel, and we reduced our oil consumption by almost 1 percent. Unintended consequences are almost always unenvisioned consequences as well. If you lack the vision to look over the horizon and see what's coming next, unintended consequences are likely right around the corner.

Obviously it was not the intent to cause distress both at home and

abroad, but good intentions are not sufficient cause for Congress to plant its head in the sand and ignore what is becoming increasingly obvious.

Our renewable standard is creating problems with food prices here at home and food shortages abroad. It's leading to destabilization of world governments because of the effect of hunger and deprivation in developing countries. It is time for this Congress to get it right. It's time for this Congress to reexamine those renewable fuel standards, back off for a while until the price situation stabilizes in the world market. And we have to get serious about increasing energy supply to run this economy, to run what Ronald Reagan described as the last best hope on Earth for democracy.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. CARTER (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today after 3 p.m. on account of a family medical emergency.

Mr. COBLE (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today until 4:30 p.m. on account of attending the graduation ceremony at the United States Coast Guard Academy.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today until 4:30

p.m. on account of a doctor's appointment.

Mr. TIAHRT (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today on account of a funeral in the district.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFazio, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. LANGEVIN, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. POE) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. TANCREDO, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. CALVERT, for 5 minutes, today and May 22.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION REFERRED

A concurrent resolution of the Senate of the following title was taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. Con. Res. 79. Concurrent resolution congratulating and saluting Focus: HOPE on its 40th anniversary and for its remarkable commitment and contributions to Detroit, the State of Michigan, and the United States; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

BILL PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Lorraine C. Miller, Clerk of the House reports that on May 20, 2008 she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bill.

H.R. 2419. To provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 56 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, May 22, 2008, at 10 a.m.

EXPENDITURE REPORTS CONCERNING OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL

Reports concerning the foreign currencies and U.S. dollars utilized for Speaker-Authorized Official Travel during the fourth quarter of 2007 and the first quarter of 2008, pursuant to Public Law 95-384 are as follows:

AMENDED REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN JAN. 1 AND MAR. 31, 2008

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Hon. Michael Burgess	2/20	2/24	Kuwait		3 328.00						328.00
			Iraq								
			Pakistan								
			Afghanistan								
Commercial Air Fare							8,022.00				8,022.00
Hon. Barbara Cubin	2/15	2/21	Brazil		1,616.00		(³)				1,616.00
Hon. Barbara Cubin	3/24	3/25	Egypt		278.00		(³)				278.00
	3/25	3/26	Afghanistan				(³)				75.00
	3/26	3/29	Pakistan		998.31		(³)				998.31
Hon. John Shimkus	3/29	3/30	Czech Republic		431.12		(³)				431.12
Commercial Air Fare	1/16	1/19	Lithuania		255.00						255.00
Vito Fossella			England		(⁴)						
			France		(⁴)						
Commercial Air Fare							8,429.01				8,429.01
Round trip rail fare: London/Paris							434.00				434.00
Committee total					3,981.43		24,942.40				28,923.83

¹ Per diem constitutes lodging and meals.
² If foreign currency is used, enter U.S. dollar equivalent; if U.S. currency is used, enter amount expended.
³ Per diem used in Kuwait only.
⁴ Per diem to be provided on amended report.
⁵ Military air transportation.

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL, Chairman, May 8, 2008.

REPORT OF EXPENDITURES FOR OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL, COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, EXPENDED BETWEEN JAN. 1 AND MAR. 31, 2008

Name of Member or employee	Date		Country	Per diem ¹		Transportation		Other purposes		Total	
	Arrival	Departure		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency ²
Hon. John Tanner	12/31	1/2	New Zealand		300.00						300.00
	1/2	1/4	Antarctica								
	1/4	1/5	New Zealand		156.00						156.00
	1/5	1/7	Australia		350.00						350.00
Hon. John Larson	1/7	1/8	Canada		288.00			485.14			773.14
	1/8	1/12	United Kingdom		650.00			1,877.34			2,527.34