and gas exploration at 1.3 billion acres. Currently, only 68 million acres of Federal land are being explored for oil and gas.

This Congress should be more concerned with opening up Federal land to energy production than wasting time arguing over the 5 percent of land that is currently available.

Democrats have pushed for higher gas prices for decades. Now that they have finally succeeded, Democrats seem determined to keep them that way.

Madam Speaker, we know increasing supply will lower the price of gasoline and we have the means to do so. Drill here, drill now, pay less.

Mr. HOLT. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 6251, the Responsible Federal Oil and Gas Lease Act.

Over the last few months we have frequently heard claims from our colleagues on the other side of the aisle that we need to open up more Federal lands to oil and gas drilling, the magic bullet that will solve our energy crisis. They have told the American people that Democrats and environmentalists are protecting our Nation's most sensitive and special environments at the expense of the American people. They have claimed that opening up land in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) and on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) would quickly help bring down the price of gas. Not only are these claims misleading American families desperately seeking help with skyrocketing gas prices, they are completely false.

Currently 81 percent of our Nation's Federal lands are available to be leased for the purpose of oil and gas drilling. Sixty-eight million acres of the lands open for drilling both onshore and offshore currently are leased by oil companies who are not using them for production. It is estimated that these leased but unused lands could produce an additional 4.8 million barrels of oil and 44.7 billion cubic feet of natural gas each day, nearly doubling U.S. oil production and cutting oil imports by a third. Existing leases can also come online much faster than any newly leased lands, which would save only pennies per gallon, more than a decade down the road.

I would like to commend my colleague from West Virginia, Representative NICK RAHALL, for introducing H.R. 6251, the Responsible Federal Oil and Gas Lease Act. This legislation would require oil companies to certify to the Department of the Interior that they are actively developing on the lands that they have already leased. If these oil companies are not producing on these lands, they either would have to relinquish these leases or start producing on them before they could apply to lease additional lands. Also my colleagues who say ''drill, drill, drill'' should support this legislation and they should stop talking about drilling on our environmentally sensitive coastlines and wildlife refuges until oil companies have gone as far as they can towards on these currently leased lands.

This legislation is common sense and I urge my colleagues to support it. There is no logic to opening up more land to oil and gas drilling when we are not utilizing the leases we already have. Of course this legislation is not a long term solution to America's energy needs. Currently we produce 3 percent of the world's oil and consume 25 percent. Unless we find a way to dramatically reduce our consumption we will never be able to drill our way to energy independence. I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to develop a long term solution to this crisis.

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam Speaker, I will vote for this bill.

In recent days, discussion of the bill has included statements—by some supporters and some opponents alike—that I found exaggerated in their descriptions of the likely effect of its enactment. I regret that, and think it would be better to avoid the ''use it or lose it'' rhetoric that oversimplifies the issue and fails to reflect the reality that oil and gas exploration is a complicated commercial and scientific enterprise involving efforts not easily fitting within strict regulatory timelines.

But while the bill may not be as far-reaching as some have claimed, I think it is a reasonable response to current conditions and should be passed.

In essence, the bill would bar the current holders of Federal mineral leases—whether for onshore or offshore areas—from obtaining additional leases unless they are able to show that they are ''diligently developing'' the leases they already hold. The Secretary of the Interior would be responsible for spelling out in regulations exactly what would be needed to show such ''due diligence.''

Current Interior Department regulations include provisions addressing due diligence requirements, so this is not a new concept. But I think giving it greater emphasis is appropriate in view of the continuing importance of oil even as we work to increase the availability and use of alternative energy sources.

More useful in terms of energy policy, this bill will reinforce the provisions of current law that aim to prevent hoarding of leases, and by providing an incentive for relinquishment of some leases may increase the opportunity for others to seek and obtain the right to explore for and perhaps produce oil or gas from those lands.

This approach is similar to that taken when Congress amended the coal-leasing laws by passing the Coal Leasing Act Amendments of 1976 over President Ford's veto. That 1976 legislation provided for a due-diligence requirement as part of a comprehensive overhaul of the laws governing leasing and development of federally owned coal resources—a provision that some analysts have said had the most immediate practical effect of any of the legislation's various provisions.

As a result, for several decades the holders of Federal coal leases have been required by law to diligently develop their leases, which has aided in the orderly and efficient development of the Nation's coal. I think a similar reinforcement of existing law for leasing of other Federal energy resources makes sense.

This bill alone is certainly not all that needs to be done to improve our energy policies. But I think it can make at least a modest contribution to achieving that, and so I will support it.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. DEGETTE). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6251, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Ms. FALLIN. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

PERMISSION TO CONSIDER AS ADOPTED MOTIONS TO SUSPEND THE RULES

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the motions to suspend the rules relating to the following measures be considered as adopted in the form considered by the House on Tuesday June 24, 2008:

House Resolution 1294, House Concurrent Resolution 163, House Resolution 353, House Resolution 1231, H.R. 2245, H.R. 4264, H.R. 4918, House Resolution 1271, House Concurrent Resolution 370, House Concurrent Resolution 195, House Resolution 970, House Concurrent Resolution 365.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, sundry motions to reconsider are laid on the table and titles are amended as applicable.

There was no objection.

CONDITIONAL ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY, JUNE 30, 2008

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today on a motion offered pursuant to this order, it adjourn to meet at 10 a.m. on Monday, June 30, 2008, unless it sooner has received a message from the Senate transmitting its concurrence in House Concurrent Resolution 379, in which case the House shall stand adjourned pursuant to that concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Minnesota?

There was no objection.

PERMISSION TO REDUCE TIME FOR ELECTRONIC VOTING DURING PROCEEDINGS TODAY

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that, during proceedings today in the House and in the Committee of the Whole, the Chair may be authorized to reduce to 2 minutes the minimum time for electronic voting on any question that otherwise could be subjected to 5-minute voting under clause 8 or 9 of rule XX or under clause 6 of rule XVIII.

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

There was no objection.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members