

tax bill. The bottom 20 percent get a single percent of the relief.

□ 1015

Is it timely? It is not phased in for years. The phase-in on the marriage penalty relief does not even begin until 4 years from now. That is not marriage penalty relief, that is a distant anniversary present, much less than is represented in the tax bill.

Finally, is there room for other priorities? There is not a dollar of additional defense spending as soon to be recommended by the Secretary of Defense contained in this budget. It raises the prospect that we will be raiding the trust funds, and the tax bill should be defeated.

ENERGY CRISIS IN CALIFORNIA

(Mr. CUNNINGHAM asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, my colleagues on the other side spoke about the California energy problem. There is a desperate problem in California and all over the West Coast.

However, I want to tell my colleagues, special interests have kept us from building power plants in the State of California for over 20 years. While our population growth has increased, our ability to produce our own power has reduced. They have stopped nuclear power, they have stopped new generating power, and now we are facing the biggest crisis in decades. At a time when most of our power generators in California were forced to be outside the State because of these special interest groups, Governor Gray Davis, exercised no responsibility for the newly deregulated energy market place, and that put us in the situation we are in right now, especially for San Diego, because San Diego Gas & Electric is a private industry and cannot buy inexpensive public power.

There were two natural gas power generators, two different types, built to be environmentally safe. The President offered to help Gray Davis obtain these generators. Gov. Davis said, we do not need them. Another company upgraded its energy plant and went to get the operating license from Gray Davis, our governor said, if you unionize this plant, I will give you your license.

The biggest problem we face in California is the governor of California, he has failed us in his handling of this energy crisis.

CALIFORNIA NEEDS IMMEDIATE RELIEF FROM ENERGY COSTS

(Ms. SOLIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, as a representative from the great State of California, I have to tell my colleagues that my constituents are angry. We have had to sit through blackouts; we have had to see the increase in our gasoline prices, and a loaf of bread, by the way, has gone up as well. People are suffering. They are crying out for this government, for FERC to do something, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. We are waiting for their action. We are not seeing anything.

Last year, California had to pay \$30 per megawatt hour. This time, it is almost \$2,000 an hour. People in my district whose average income is about \$31,000 cannot afford to live through this summer. We need immediate action; we need relief. We do not want to see drilling. We want to see clean water, we want to see our energy restored. We do not have a problem with the supply, as was stated earlier by my colleague. What we see here in California is the very fact that energy producers from out of State, from Texas, who are now making these policy decisions on energy, are the ones that are robbing our consumers in California.

I ask for my colleagues to vote down this proposal on energy and also this infamous tax cut that will not benefit the residents in my district.

SAY NO TO BIG OIL

(Ms. DELAURO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, America's families are struggling with high energy costs, but the Bush administration is more interested in catering to the needs of big oil and energy companies, rather than helping the working- and middle-class families that need their relief now.

We need long-term solutions that encourage exploration, increase refining capacity, and help Americans conserve energy. But, in the short term, we need to aggressively protect consumers, investigate price fixing, and consider releasing oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve to moderate the effects of price spikes. The administration has rejected these options out of hand.

What is their solution? What does the President say? Drill in the Arctic National Reserve and relax clean water and air standards.

Last week, the President suggested that his tax cut will solve the energy crisis, a bizarre and a disconnected idea. That hard-earned refund, my friends, should not go into the pockets of the energy executives who are already making outrageous profits at the expense of hard-pressed American families.

I call on the President to say "no" to his big oil and big energy friends. Say "yes" to America's families that need help with rising gas and energy prices.

POLITICS AND THE ENERGY CRISIS

(Mr. BALDACCI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BALDACCI. Mr. Speaker, a short while ago Senator JIM JEFFORDS announced he was changing his registration to be an Independent and not be a Republican anymore and, in that statement, he also talked about the differences of opinion he has with the administration in regards to energy and the environment.

I first want to say how pleased I am with Senator JEFFORDS' decision and how well regarded he is as someone who is very thoughtful and fair and very much a public servant, and with the public interests in mind. We in New England appreciate that.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The Chair would remind all Members that debate in the House may not include personal references to Senators. The gentleman may proceed.

Mr. BALDACCI. Mr. Speaker, we recognize that the interest of the public have not been represented.

If we look at this proposal that has been put forward by the administration where it talks about just the supply, it talks about drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Had this Congress and the leadership in this House not earmarked out raising the fuel efficiency standards, we would not need to be doing that drilling, because we would be getting twice as much oil out of the fuel efficiency and out of the savings we would have gotten from conservation. This administration has eliminated the scientific research and development so that we could be able to better generate more energy efficiency, both in our automobiles and vehicles and in our manufacturing and small businesses.

We must reject this. It represents the special interests and not the public interest, and many public servants throughout this country are signing on.

TAX CUT EATS UP ENERGY COSTS

(Mr. BACA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, President Bush and Vice President CHENEY have turned their backs on the people of California. What we need them to do is to step up to the plate and swing the bat.

Millions are suffering because of their indifference, their protection of oil big businesses versus the people of California. We need to protect our consumers. Instead of making out-of-State generators play fair, they are letting them lead America.

We are hemorrhaging. Our seniors should not have to choose between electricity and food. Our schools and factories should not have to suffer or close their doors.

This is about children in San Bernardino crosswalks. This is about protecting jobs, having the lights turned on. This is about working families. This is about individuals who are suffering because President Bush has failed to take on the responsibilities.

It was said earlier that it was Governor Gray Davis. No, deregulation was started by Pete Wilson who actually had the State of California deregulate. We are suffering because the Republican Party thought there would be enough energy. We do not have the energy. We need the President to step up to the plate. A tax cut will not make up for the skyrocketing bills. Let us put on a price cap.

FUTURE HOLDS EXPLODING EXPENDITURES AND DEFICITS

(Mr. HOYER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, in 1981, we ushered in a decade of profligate spending and exploding deficits. In 1990, we passed a budget bill that was tough and it helped bring down those deficits and bring us a surplus. In 1993, we took another action which was tough and helped bring down those deficits and create the surpluses. In 1997, in a bipartisan way, we passed a bill that was tough and helped bring down deficits and create surpluses. We now wait on a conference report that will again, as we did 20 years ago, usher in a decade of exploding expenditures and exploding deficits. That is irresponsible.

We passed a personal bankruptcy bill that said we expected each citizen of America to be personally responsible. Mr. Speaker, it is equally important that we be collectively responsible and reject this bad policy for America.

PRESIDENT BUSH SHOULD STOP SUPPORTING BIG OIL AND SUPPORT THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

(Mr. DEFAZIO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, the chairman of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, hand-picked by President George Bush, Mr. Hebert, has chosen to turn a blind eye toward the price gouging and market manipulation which is enriching a few huge energy companies, several of which happen to be based in Houston, Texas, at the expense of tens of millions of people in the Western United States.

It is not only Californians who are suffering. We are paying a higher aver-

age price in the wholesale market in Oregon and Washington than they are in California, and it is not necessary. It is manipulated.

Let us look at one company, Reliant Power. Profits up by 1,800 percent in one year. Is that not grand, from \$27 million to \$482 million. But on Sunday, the San Francisco Chronicle revealed that they are blatantly manipulating the market. They have phone lines between their traders and their trade rooms and their plant operators in California, and when the price of energy drops, they shut the plants off and turn the lights out.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. DEFAZIO. And then when the price skyrockets, they turn them back on. They are destroying the plants, they are destroying the economy, and the Bush administration and their hand-picked chair of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission are refusing to take the actions required under the law to stop unjust and unreasonable price gouging and market manipulation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. DEFAZIO. It is past time for the Bush administration to stop supporting the energy companies and support the American people.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would appreciate it if the Members would abide by the 1-minute time limit.

FERC MUST INSTITUTE PRICE CAPS

(Ms. LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, at a time when my home State of California and more and more States in this country are dealing with the most severe energy crisis in the past several decades, I believe it is really the height of irresponsibility to pass huge tax cuts for the very wealthy while, at the same time, not even providing any assistance in the budget for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program. Also, cutting funding for renewable energy research and also neglecting to get a national energy policy in place to help consumers. This is the height of irresponsibility.

The LIHEAP program helps low-income Americans pay their utility bills. It is severely underfunded, so we must fight for an increase in LIHEAP funding this year for our senior citizens and our low-income residents.

Finally, this energy crisis has gotten so bad that many of our California

State legislators and the city of Oakland have joined together to file a lawsuit to make sure that the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission establish just and reasonable prices. It is unconscionable that the price gouging continues to go on, and that our residents in California are going to face a very serious hot summer.

Mr. Speaker, we must move forward with price caps. We must insist that our Federal Government insist that the FERC do this, and we must do this right away.

BLIND CHOICES

(Mr. OWENS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, the spirit of Tiananmen Square, blind and extreme, has invaded decisions about energy policies in California. The same spirit of the tanks in Tiananmen Square has invaded the latest decisions with respect to Vieques in Puerto Rico. Both the Navy and a Federal judge are blindly pursuing a policy which rules out the choices of the people, refuses to recognize the choices of the people, and have resorted to measures like putting people in jail for 90 days.

One New York leader, Al Sharpton, has now been sentenced to 90 days in jail in Puerto Rico, and several other political leaders have been sentenced to 40 days in jail.

□ 1030

This kind of extremism will only make martyrs of people and also will call for an invasion of Vieques. The Navy does not need Vieques that badly. We should listen to the will of the people, not have a blind eye similar to the tanks that rolled over the will of the people at Tiananmen Square.

Mr. Speaker, judges have done enough harm also in this generation and should stop seeking their 15 minutes of fame. This judge is wrong. These sentences are wrong. Vieques should be set free.

RISE IN ENERGY PRICES

(Mr. WELLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, I have been enjoying some of the rhetoric I have been hearing from some of my friends on the other side of the aisle today. Clearly, when it comes to a rise in energy prices, the policies of my friends on the left side of the aisle is very simple, and that is called pass the buck.

They talk about the California energy crisis. Who has been in charge in California? A Democratic governor, a Democratic State legislature. Who prevented the power plants from being