

of the people who pull up to the pumps in my district are happy with the price, but I can't believe that the oil companies are unhappy about the price. I don't see them complaining about their high profits.

So when you say if we could drill in the deep water, I don't know what you mean by deep water. It could be more than 1,000 feet which is where we are drilling now in some places in the Gulf of Mexico. But we do have 33 million acres available on the Outer Continental Shelf in the Gulf of Mexico available for drilling right now. And if the drills were available and the inclination were available, I would hope that the companies would pursue, either the large companies or small companies. The problem with small companies is that it is a very expensive proposition, as the gentleman knows.

Mr. BLUNT. I thank the gentleman for that observation.

I would say in terms of deep water, I think sometimes I say that rather than make the point that when we talk about drilling on the coast, and the Atlantic and Pacific coast which is where we restrict, and no one else restricts their coastal drilling, I am always talking about something way beyond the line of sight. I can say that as well as deep water.

I think there is drilling in the gulf even significantly deeper than the 1,000 feet to the floor and below that. But there is potential there. If, in fact, people of the various States don't want to drill well beyond their shores even though they get part of the revenue, that is a decision they'd get to make. I do think that is an issue that is dramatically changing.

I also believe firmly, and every economist that I have read on this topic agrees, that if we announced we were going to drill, it wouldn't matter if anybody had a drill or not. That one signal from the United States where we have at least twice as much readily available oil shale in the Rockies as Saudi Arabia has in its known reserves, readily available, not to count the other amounts that could be available later, just if we were to announce that we were going after that supply, it would have an impact on price.

We had a hearing a couple of weeks ago where we had people from Interior talk about that particular supply, a lot of supply well off the coast on the Atlantic and Pacific coast. And if there is speculation here, I think the best way to deal with speculators would be to get them caught on the wrong side of a market that is going the other way because the United States of America has announced it is going to go after its own resources in a more dramatic way.

There are two prohibitions on the appropriations bill. One is coastal drilling on the Atlantic and Pacific coast, no money can be used to issue a lease, which is another way that legislators

say you are not going to get a lease, and one in the oil shale in the Rockies. Removing both of those prohibitions would have a huge impact on price. It would start us in the right direction. The idea that some of this oil won't be available for 3 years, some of it for 5, some of it for 10, we are still going to need oil 10 years from now. Oil that is not available for 10 years is not an unacceptable goal because we know we are going to need oil 10 years from now.

I am convinced, I will tell my good friend, and we are good friends, I am convinced that if we just announced we were going to take those steps, it would have an immediate impact on price at the pump. We both know the reason there is no line at the pump. I went to 12 gas stations in my district on Friday and Saturday. There was no line anywhere, but every person that I talked to, whether they were traveling to Branson, Missouri, on vacation, or filling their car up in Andersonville or Neosho, Missouri, they all had a story as to how these gas prices were affecting their lives in other ways. Members have those stories. We can do something about them. But to do that, it is going to take more than a 20-minute debate on whether we release oil that we have already bought in the short term. If supply matters, long term going after that supply really matters.

I yield to my friend.

Mr. HOYER. We agreed with your premise, and we offered a bill to have that happen, and it was Use It or Lose It which said we have 107 billion barrels identified, speculated to be available on presently held leases, a 14-year supply in the United States of America. And what we wanted to direct the administration to do was start leasing that land right now because we agreed with your premise that the psychological effect would be that those who have the petroleum and are frankly selling it very dear, and many of our consumers are being really hurt, we understand that, our premise was either by drilling in the National Petroleum Reserve now or drilling in the 68 million acres available in the lower 48, including 33 million in the gulf now, that it would have exactly the effect that you projected.

Unfortunately, we also believe that releasing oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, which in 1991 and two other years, I don't have the exact years, we have done it three times, including once under this administration after Hurricane Katrina, in 1991 price went down 33 percent. It went down less when SPR was released after Hurricane Katrina.

Our view is you are correct. Psychologically, that would have a real effect on the market. Unfortunately, we couldn't pass that. We wanted to pass it as quickly as possible. How do you pass something as quickly as possible? You put it on suspension and give it to

the Senate. Unfortunately, large numbers on your side of the aisle determined that was not a policy that they wanted to pursue. So they had no psychological effect, which we thought would have been, as you do, a psychological effect and may well have had an immediate impact on pricing by the barrel, and hopefully then would be converted to price at the pump.

Mr. BLUNT. I just advance the idea that the moment we are in right now is not a Katrina-analogous moment. There is no temporary disruption of supply that you need to do something about. There is a long-term problem that needs to be solved. In fact, you mentioned those gas lines. Those gas lines in the seventies, the embargo in the seventies, that led us to this idea of a Strategic Petroleum Reserve. And at the time we set the reserve up, it is the same size it is now, or when Congress set it up, before many of us were here, at least, at the time Congress set it up, it had a 117-day supply. That same amount of oil is now a 56-day supply because of the amount we now use.

Taking 3 days out of that 56-day supply only postpones, in the view of many of us, the reality of dealing with the long-term challenge that we face. We would like to have a debate on that.

You could bring that bill back to the floor next week under a rule. If a majority wanted to send it to the Senate, they could. But the chance you take is that others with another idea would get at least one amendment on the floor, and that's why we are here with suspension bills as opposed to rule bills because it's a take-it-or-leave-it-this-is-all-of-the-debate kind of approach.

I yield back.

ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY, JULY 28, 2008

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 11 a.m. on Monday next; and further, when the House adjourns on that day, it adjourn to meet at 10:30 a.m. on Tuesday, July 29, for morning-hour debate.

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

There was no objection.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday next.

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

There was no objection.

WELCOMING BRADEN ALEXANDER
HEWLETT

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

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Members of Congress do not like to miss votes on the House floor, and I agree with that feeling. There is sometimes very good reason Members do miss votes, whether it is illness or important business in our district.

This last week, I missed both Tuesday and Wednesday due to an important reason: my wife and I became grandparents for the third time. Our grandson was born Tuesday, July 22, at 3:20 p.m. at Christus St. John's Hospital in Houston. Braden Alexander Hewlett weighed in at 8 pounds, 1 ounce, and 19 inches long.

Our daughter, Dr. Angela Hewlett, and her husband, father Dr. Alex Hewlett, and now big sister, Lauren, who is all of 3 years old, and Braden are doing well, and I want to congratulate their growing family.

HONORING CAPTAIN BARRY K.
CAVER

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

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Captain Barry K. Caver, commander of the Texas Ranger Company E, as he retires from his long and distinguished career of service to the public.

Ranger Captain John Ford once described the Texas Rangers and said of them: "They knew their duty and they did it. While in a town, they made no braggadocio demonstration. They did not gallop through the streets, and shoot and yell. They had a specie of moral discipline which developed moral courage. They did right because it was right."

To be a Ranger is to stand in long shadow cast by some of our Nation's most famous lawmen. The tradition of the Rangers is one of intelligence, duty, honor, toughness, and self-reliance. I can think of few better images of the modern Texas Ranger than Captain Caver.

I am pleased to call this great lawman a friend, to salute him, and to thank him for his service to the people of Texas. His leadership and experience will be irreplaceable to the Rangers and he will be sorely missed by all west Texans, whether they knew him or not.

It is my honor to represent Captain Caver here in Washington. I wish him well as he finds and explores the new challenges in his life.

SALUTING NATIONAL BAR
ASSOCIATION

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

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to salute the National Bar Association that will hold its 83rd national convention in Houston, Texas. Many of its activities will be in the 18th Congressional District. The National Bar Association was formulated when its membership or its members were rejected in their attempt to be members of the American Bar Association.

Out of that creation came the opportunity to be at the cutting edge of civil rights legislation and litigation.

I want to salute the Houston Lawyers Association, salute the past presidents, the president and board of directors, and particularly I want to salute the National Bar Association for its enormous history of civil rights fighting, fighting for those who cannot speak for themselves.

Lawyers of the National Bar Association are patent lawyers, prosecutors, defense lawyers, and most of all, the holders and protectors of the Constitution. They have fought the cases in desegregating schools. They have provided opportunities for those who have sought equal employment. Yes, Mr. Speaker, they are in fact the conscience holders of the legal bar because the National Bar Association continues to stand for justice and equality and opportunity.

I am so proud that they are coming to Houston, Texas, to celebrate the 83rd annual convention, an organization of lawyers that have put forward the cause of justice. I salute them and congratulate them.

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HIGH ENERGY PRICES

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

Mr. SALI. Mr. Speaker, today the low-income families and other disadvantaged Americans are disproportionately affected by high energy prices.

Just to be clear, this is about low income. It's about the poor. It's about veterans, seniors and children. We have reached a point where our poorer citizens are spending greater and greater percentages of their limited income on energy.

With the average cost of fuel more than \$4.05 per gallon, some now have to determine whether they can get to work or even buy food. This price tag and the fact that this body hasn't done anything about it are wreaking havoc on the daily lives of Idahoans and Americans across the Nation.

Just last week I talked to a woman from Idaho whose husband is disabled and not eligible to receive disability benefits. She is the sole source of income for her family. She was worried about just being able to afford to get to work.

It's time for partisanship to be put aside. It's time for Congress to act, and it's time to increase American production of crude oil and natural gas.

HONORING FIRE CHIEF FRANK
WICHLACZ

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

Mr. KAGEN. Mr. Speaker, it has been said that when a man becomes a fireman, his greatest act of bravery has been accomplished. What he does after that is all in the line of work.

Well, yesterday in my district in northeast Wisconsin, the Pulaski community began to mourn the tragic death of Fire Chief Frank Wichlacz, a volunteer firefighter who died in a freak accident on Wednesday. The 76 year-old Chief Wichlacz gave 50 years of service to the department, which serves parts of Brown, Oconto, and Shawano counties. The last 20 years he served as chief.

In 2007, Chief Wichlacz was honored as an Everyday Hero by the Green Bay Press-Gazette newspaper for his long years of service to his community. You know Winston Churchill said, "You make a living by what you give, but you make a life by what you give." Frank Wichlacz lived those words.

His service, not only as a volunteer firefighter, but as a fire chief, made the Pulaski community a safer and better place to live. On behalf of the people of the Eighth District in northeast Wisconsin, allow me to express my deepest sympathy to his family and friends and to all in the Pulaski community.

May God bless Chief Wichlacz.

NEW HAMPSHIRE STORM

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

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Mr. Speaker, today a terrible storm hit across the State of New Hampshire. There has been death and destruction in five counties, and we have declared a state of emergency there. I am asking for the prayers of this country for the people of New Hampshire. They're a strong lot. For ages they have helped one another build their homes, their barns, their stone walls, their businesses. I know that they will find the resources once again to help each other through this calamity.

I ask the people of the country and the Congress to keep their thoughts