

THE NEED FOR OFFSHORE
DRILLING

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 29, 2008

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, with today's high price of gasoline, I would like to insert into the RECORD an article from the Baytown Sun which highlights the need for additional domestic resources through offshore drilling.

[From the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, Jun. 20, 2008]

OFFSHORE DRILLING

Led by President Bush and Sen. John McCain, a growing number of politicians say they are willing to drop strict environmental protections to allow more offshore drilling for oil. Our response: "what took y'all so long?"

It's pretty clear to most of us on the Sun editorial board that when it comes to energy, what we really need is to produce more, use less, and find new sources of power.

This nation cannot afford to put off serious energy reform any longer. Let's start with more domestic drilling by lifting the 27-year-old federal ban on offshore drilling. The moratorium applies to all federal waters, which extend three miles from the coastlines.

However, offshore drilling is no panacea. It certainly doesn't provide a short-term answer to the high gasoline prices that have angered Americans. It would take up to five years to start pumping significant amounts of oil from new wells.

But it's a step in the right direction. Working Americans rightly believe their government has a duty to finally assure the energy security of this country.

All across this state and nation, people are hurting. Small farmers, truckers, and taxi drivers are unable to cover costs. Small business owners are struggling to meet payroll. The cost of living is rising, and the value of paychecks is falling. All of this is in large part because the price of oil is too high, and the supply of oil is too uncertain.

The American people have had enough of high gas prices and our government's unwillingness to take care of us.

According to the U.S. Department of the Interior and Congressman Ted Poe, there are approximately 420 trillion cubic feet of natural gas and more than 86 billion barrels of oil yet to be discovered along the Outer Continental Shelf in the lower 48 States. That is enough oil or natural gas to:

Maintain current oil production for 87 years and current natural gas production for 68 years;

Produce gasoline for 116 million cars and heating oil for 47 million homes for 15 years;

Replace current imports from the Persian Gulf for 59 years;

Produce sufficient natural gas to heat 75 million homes for 60 years;

And supply current industrial and commercial needs for 29 years or supply electricity generating needs for 55 years.

We are the only country in the world that does not fully cultivate their oil and natural gas resources. There is absolutely no good reason why we cannot expand current offshore drilling in the Gulf of Mexico to the coasts of Florida, California and the eastern seaboard.

TRIBUTE TO MARVIN HAMMOND

HON. JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR.

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 29, 2008

Mr. DUNCAN. Madam Speaker, Marvin Hammond, a longtime friend, has now retired for the second time, first from Knoxville Utilities Board, and now from the Hallsdale-Powell Utility District.

I did all sorts of odd jobs as a boy—selling programs and refreshments at ball games, mowing yards—but my first hourly-pay job was as a groundskeeper at Holston-Chilhowee Ball Park in East Knoxville.

I was 15, and I made \$1.00 an hour. My first boss was a 19-year-old named Marvin Hammond. He worked under Coach Raleigh Johnson, but Marvin was the one who told me what to do.

From that time in the early 1960s, I have thought of Marvin Hammond as one of the finest men I have ever known.

He went from his job as manager of Holston High School athletic teams to a position as a trainer in the Cincinnati Reds Farm System and got to know many of the all-time great baseball players, such as Pete Rose and others.

He spent most of his career as an executive with the Knoxville Utilities Board. He was one of the most popular and respected employees of KUB.

I remember my first race for Congress in 1988 when he was driving me and some other people on a campaign swing to some distant parts in our district.

One of the other campaigners, jokingly but pretending to be serious, complained about his "huge" utility bill. Marvin, very concerned, said, "Lance, How much was it?" When Lance replied "\$36," Marvin almost ran off the road.

I remember another time when I was a judge, Marvin found that I was Cubmaster of a Cub Scout troop. He told me he could get several canoes from another church and he knew some people who owned a dairy farm 45 miles away with a big lake on it.

He spent his whole day getting the canoes, helping the boys tour the farm, do the canoe rides, cook out, and then load everything back up for the return.

When I was first starting my law practice and needing to make some money, Marvin told me he was head of off-campus instruction in Knoxville for Walters State Community College.

He hired me, for \$500 a semester, to teach political science, I believe for three semesters. Many of the students were police officers, which also helped me in my law practice.

So, you can see, Madam Speaker, that Marvin Hammond has had a big influence on my life. I am very grateful to him.

But he has helped so many people over the years, and I am certain he has made his community and the Nation much better by all he has done.

Sandra Clark, another longtime friend and the publisher of the Halls Shopper News, has written a column in tribute to Marvin Hammond. I would like to have it reprinted in the RECORD and call it to the attention of my colleagues and others.

[From the Shopper-News, July 21, 2008]

MISSING MARVIN

If ever there was a man who opted to wear out rather than rust out, it is Marvin Hammond.

He's retired again, but don't count on it sticking with Marvin.

A crisis in Maynardville left folks without water over the Fourth of July holiday. City officials asked Hallsdale-Powell Utility District for help, and Hammond was quick to respond. "Hook them up," he said, "and we'll work out the paperwork later."

"One man told me he had a shower for the first time in 10 days," Hammond said last week.

Utility districts network in order to sell water across systems when necessary. Maynardville Utility District had not tapped into HPUD's new water plant on Norris Lake. There are issues with water pressure and leaks up there, but these are engineering concerns—fixable.

Hammond had the vision to build a new water plant on Norris Lake and to expand the one on Melton Hill Lake. Hallsdale-Powell customers won't be running out of water. And Hammond leaves the district in a position to sell water to our neighbors.

Hammond was named president of HPUD in 2000. He took the title president emeritus last week as Darren Cardwell was elevated to the top job. Cardwell is just the third leader of HPUD, the district built by general manager Allan Gill of Powell.

Hammond, who earlier had retired from KUB, found a district with money in the bank and low rates; he left a district in debt with substantially higher rates.

Construction foreman Greg McCloud said it best: "Hallsdale was getting bigger (more customers), but we were not getting better."

Hammond set out to improve customer relations and to build partnerships with regulatory bodies such as the Environmental Protection Agency and the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation. He replaced much of the 150 miles of 2-inch galvanized water line and looked for leaks that were draining off 39 percent of HPUD's treated water. He hired engineers and consultants to upgrade the wastewater system and put a halt to violations at the treatment plant.

Engineer Nick Jackson said no violations have been reported for 25 consecutive months, and HPUD will receive the Water Environment Association operational excellence award this week at the WEA conference in Knoxville. The award covers a 2-state region of Kentucky and Tennessee.

Hammond is credited with development of a long range strategic plan which includes expanding HPUD's service area.

In 1999, HPUD served 21,780 customers with physical plant assets of \$66 million.

Today, the district serves 28,200 customers with physical plant assets of \$144 million.

Sometimes we just get lucky.

Halls and Powell residents were blessed with the leadership of Allan Gill—a man with military bearing who brooked no nonsense and built a water system through grit and willpower.

Likewise, we were blessed with the leadership of Marvin Hammond—a man with vision for the future and the courage to raise the rates to pay for progress.