

for all of us. My condolences and best wishes go out to her husband Joshua Lang, her parents, Ann and Joseph, and all of her family and friends.

#### THE PRICE OF A BARREL OF OIL

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

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, from Congress Daily AM on Monday, 21 April, the heading was: Florida delight as talks intensify behind closed doors on several issues. Members negotiate behind the scenes to finish a farm bill conference and plan their maneuvers for moving a war supplemental bill and more possible tradeoffs to move a Colombia Free Trade Agreement. Funny. No talk about gasoline, no talk about the high energy prices. The number one issue affecting consumers today and the pocketbooks of mom and dad and driving kids to events is the high cost of gasoline.

When this majority took over, the price of a barrel of crude oil was \$58.31. Today—actually, this is wrong—it was updated at \$117. It did get to \$118 a barrel. When you don't have a plan, you plan to fail. I would hope that the Democrat majority would, in their negotiations, talk about how they are going to address the high cost of energy in this country.

#### ADMINISTRATION DRIVING UP OIL PRICES

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

Mr. KUCINICH. I'd like to follow up on the comments of my good friend from Illinois. The high cost of gasoline is troubling all Americans. \$3.50 a gallon, approaching \$120 a barrel. Now I just would respectfully suggest that the administration has a lot to do with this. This administration, which has a great familiarity with the oil industry, has pursued policies, including the war in Iraq, that has led to the price of oil being driven up. Even the threats on attacking Iran have at one time or another helped to increase the cost of the price of a barrel of oil.

There is one thing that this Congress can do immediately to start to gain the American public some relief, and that is to bring a windfall profits tax forward. Enforce some discipline in the marketplace. Bring these oil companies to heel by using the power of Congress to tax the excess profits and take that money and put it into a fund that would enable Americans to get tax breaks for the purchase of energy efficient vehicles. This is the approach we ought to be taking.

#### CONGRESS MUST ACT ON ENERGY PRICES

(Mr. MCHENRY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, my constituents are concerned about high gas prices. We are a commuter district in western North Carolina, and so when we move to go to the marketplace, if we go to take our kids to school, we have to get an automobile and pay for gasoline. My constituents are struggling under these high gas prices.

It's about time that this Congress acted so we have more refineries, that we have new exploration here at home so we don't have to be dependent on foreign oil. And we must invest in alternatives long term so we don't have to rely on foreign oil at all.

Mr. Speaker, it's about time this Congress acted, and tax increases are not the way to do it. It is to increase production. That will help get down these high gas prices.

#### SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

#### HEALTH CARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. MCDERMOTT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, reforming health care in America is not nearly as hard as the special interests would like the American people to believe. The special interests want to protect their profits, but Congress should concern itself with protecting the health and well-being of the American people.

There are two major news stories today that should be viewed side-by-side. On their own, each story is powerful. Taken together, however, the stories offer compelling evidence of what happens when special interests lobby against meaningful reform in the United States; while in France, people receive universal health care that is ranked number one in the world by the World Health Organization.

A new study conducted jointly by Harvard University and the University of Washington in my district has yielded a startling conclusion. Reporter Tom Paulson has the story in today's Seattle-Post Intelligencer. Let me read an excerpt, "One of every five American women and one of every 25 men are either dying at a younger age or seeing no improvement in life span. The lead authors told the PI, "It is

what you would expect to see in a developing Nation, not here in the United States," according to Dr. Ezzati, a Harvard professor. Dr. Chris Murray from UW called it a complete surprise, and said, "It's remarkable in the history of the U.S."

We pay more for health care than any nation on Earth, yet life expectancy is declining for millions of Americans.

□ 1930

At the same time, for about half the cost, every French citizen has access to universal health care, rated the best in the world.

ABC News Online carried the story of the French system. It includes data that shows that universal health care coverage works. In France, there is one doctor for every 430 people. In the United States, there is one doctor for every 1,230 people. The average life expectancy in France is 2 years longer than in the U.S. And the French system is one of the most expensive in the world at \$3,500 per person, but it is nothing compared to the \$6,100 we spend in the United States for every individual. And we have 47 million without any health care coverage, and millions more with less than adequate coverage because it is too expensive.

When the American people face soaring costs for health care, it is time to create an American universal health care system. When millions of Americans face a declining life expectancy, it is time to create an American universal health care system. When the U.S. health care system is ranked 37th in the world by the World Health Organization, it is time to do something.

We don't have one today, because special interests have used their influence to put profits ahead of people by perpetuating a broken-down system, and whenever someone tries to change it, they spend millions of dollars to try and scare people. They are not spending all that money to provide better health care; they are spending it to protect their profit margins. And they will try to scare us into thinking that the Americans can't develop a plan. That is not true.

An American universal system is not only possible, it is imperative. These two stories, which I will enter into the RECORD, are stark reminders of a crisis that is growing because it is not being treated.

In medicine, it would be as if all the tests showed that a tumor was growing inside a patient and we did nothing about it. It would be malpractice and it would needlessly endanger a patient. Without an American universal health care plan, that is exactly what we are doing to the American people. Ignoring the truth has never worked in medicine, and it won't work for health care in this country. We need an American universal health care system, and we need it now.