

Let us learn the lesson. Let us come together and let us be certain that we are thoughtful and that we realize our Nation depends on an energy source that is going to be consistent and supply lines that are going to be open.

□ 1030

VICTIMS RIGHTS WEEK

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

Mr. COSTA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak on behalf of the Victims Rights Caucus which Congressmembers POE, HARRIS and I chair. We have introduced a resolution that recognizes what many Americans know all too well: crime does not know any geographic, demographic, or political boundary. It touches all of our communities.

We support the Victims Rights Week and the Crime Victims Fund, legacies that President Reagan and Congress passed in the 1980s. The Crime Victims Fund is distributed to service providers who assist millions of crime victims annually throughout our communities in a host of ways. It is paid for by fines levied on criminals, not taxpayers.

Yet today, our caucus is fighting to protect that fund from this administration's wrongheaded attempt to balance the budget on the backs of victims by putting those dollars into the general fund. That is simply wrong.

We must ensure that this fund is used for its original intent: to provide for crime victims, to provide for probation departments, and to help the victims who truly need and deserve our assistance to hold offenders accountable.

PASS LOBBYING REFORM

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

Mr. PENCE. Madam Speaker, after months of scandal and years of deficit spending, millions of Americans fear that this Congress is fiscally and ethically bankrupt.

This week, thanks to the bold leadership of Speaker DENNIS HASTERT, Congress will consider historic lobbying reform legislation that will bring new transparency to the relationship between lobbyists and lawmakers, and I applaud it.

But as important as these changes are, we must also change the way we spend the people's money here on the floor of this Chamber. And this legislation also includes commonsense reforms in earmark spending that will end an era of unaccountable pork-barrel spending in Congress.

It is said that righteousness exalts a nation, and meaningful lobbying reform and earmark reform will lift the spirits of the American people demoralized by years of disappointment from Washington, D.C.

I urge my colleagues to come together in the spirit of that high standard and this privileged service and support lobbying reform legislation.

GOP IGNORED ENERGY PROBLEM FOR 5 YEARS

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

Mr. FILNER. Madam Speaker, it is hard to believe that when President Bush took office in 2001, the average price of gasoline was \$1.65. Since that time, on both the President and Congressional Republicans' watch, gas prices have doubled, leaving everyday families squeezed to afford other necessities.

Washington Republicans have had 5 years to develop a comprehensive energy proposal that would not only free America from reliance on Middle East oil, but would also crack down on price gouging and market manipulation. Instead, almost immediately after taking office, the Vice President began holding secret meetings with oil and gas company executives to create a special-interest energy plan. The secret Bush administration energy plan was finally rubber-stamped by the Republican Congress last year.

Under this energy plan, oil companies got at least \$20 billion in both tax breaks and royalty-free drilling rights, while hardworking Americans got stuck with the bill.

It is no wonder that their initials are G-O-P: Gas, Oil and Petroleum. Democrats refuse to do the dirty work of the special interests and are demanding that this Congress crack down on price gouging. It is time House Republicans join us in providing some real relief to the American consumer.

ENERGY SOLUTIONS

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

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Speaker, in 1995 President Clinton, led by his environmental hard-core left-wing friends, vetoed drilling for oil in the Alaska National Wildlife Reserve. Now, had he signed that bill in 1995, which had passed the Senate and the House, we would have a 20 percent higher supply in domestic oil, 1 million barrels of gas each day more than what we have in our current supply. How big is the wildlife reserve? It is the size of South Carolina. How big is the exploration area? About 2,000 acres.

How many of the environmentalists and how many of the Democrats drove to town today in an SUV that makes 15 miles a gallon? We could use that supply. It is not the total answer, but it is part of the answer. And the Democrats always conveniently overlook that 10 years ago their President vetoed a bill that would have increased domestic gas supply today 20 percent.

There are other solutions that we are continuing to work on, and I hope that we can get them to join us on them.

REPUBLICANS REFUSE TO HELP CONSUMERS WITH GAS PRICES

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

Ms. WATSON. Madam Speaker, yesterday the Republican-controlled House returned from a second spring break recess. Today is the 116th day of 2006. Remember, you set the House schedule.

Would you believe, Madam Speaker, that this is only the 22nd day we have had votes here in the House this year? That is 22 days out of a total of 116. We indeed are a do-nothing Congress.

House Republicans simply have not focused on the concerns of average Americans. Today, Americans face record prices at the gas pump. In some areas, gas prices are hovering around \$4 a gallon. Since President Bush took office in 2001, gas prices have doubled, and yet for 5 years now, House Republicans have done absolutely nothing to address the problem. They passed an energy bill last year, but the Bush administration's own Energy Department admitted that it would not do anything to reduce gas prices.

Madam Speaker, it is time for House Republicans to stop sending us home for breaks. The American people were rightfully demanding a solution to the energy crisis. It is time for the do-nothing Congress to do something.

BETTER ENERGY POLICY IS POSSIBLE

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

Ms. MCKINNEY. Madam Speaker, the American people seem wedged between record oil company profits, half-billion-dollar retirement packages for oil executives, and a Federal energy policy that just does not work. Now Americans have to choose between not only medicine through a prescription drug plan that is a boon to pharmaceuticals and a doggie to the people who need the drugs, but the people are also being victimized by a secret energy plan drawn up by oil barons. For years, people like me have been saying that this Nation needs to decrease oil dependence, that it was depletable, causes global warming, was not worth destroying ANWR or waging wars over.

Better policy is possible, but we won't get it from this administration of oil barons.

ENERGY SOLUTION NEEDED

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