

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.)

Mr. DAVIS of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, I do not want to blame Republicans or Democrats for the price of gas. I think perhaps all of us have somewhat to share in it. We need to find a solution so we can become energy independent.

I believe that the scientists, those people who live in our country who won a war, have the capability of creating a situation and doing the scientific research necessary to make us self-sufficient.

But I do have a suggestion. I hear a lot from the other side about the environmental issues. We have passed several trade agreements in this country: GATT and the WTO that regulates environmental issues and labor issues and prohibits the employers in this country from even negotiating issues with those countries. So corporate America is leaving in an exodus from this country to build factories in Asia and other parts of the world. My suggestion to Big Oil is they use part of the \$113 billion that they earned last year just to move south of Padre Island and south of San Diego and build refineries if that is what is causing all of our high gas prices. They can build them there without environmental issues, and certainly no labor issues would be involved. That is my answer.

ADDRESSING SKYROCKETING ENERGY PRICES

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

Mr. LYNCH. Madam Speaker, we have to stop the partisan bickering here. The American people need our help. I am sure we are all aware of the effects and hardships that \$3-a-gallon gas prices are having on average American citizens and their families. It amounts to a huge tax increase. And the saddest part of this fiasco is that much of this price increase is the result of mere speculation. It is, therefore, preventable.

We, the Democrats, have an answer which will provide immediate relief to American families. It is H.R. 3936 offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. STUPAK). It would regulate and put an end to the process of price gouging. We have been trying to get this bill passed for some time.

For once we need to forget about the rich oil companies and record profits and tax cuts for the oil companies. That needs to go away. We need to start remembering the American people who need our help. The Republican leadership needs to realize this economy is going in the toilet as a result of this administration's economic policies and millions of American families are suffering. We need to pass the Stupak anti-price-gouging bill.

REPUBLICANS TOO COZY WITH OIL AND GAS COMPANIES

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

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, last year when gas prices hit record highs after Hurricane Katrina, House Republicans called the CEOs of the oil and gas companies to a closed-door meeting for an explanation.

One of the CEOs Republicans met with was ExxonMobil's chief executive, Lee Raymond, who just walked away with a \$400 million retirement package. House Republicans voiced dismay as to why these CEOs did not get the message last fall.

Who was the House Republican leadership trying to fool? Why would oil and gas executives worry about Republicans taking action against them? After all, House Republicans have refused repeated Democratic efforts to allow a vote on tough legislation that would empower the Federal Government to end price gouging.

House Republicans also supported an energy bill last year that did little more than provide \$20 million in gifts to the oil and gas companies.

Madam Speaker, House Republicans have a cozy relationship with these guys, and they have had it for too long to be taken seriously. It is no wonder oil and gas CEOs did not get the Republican message.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate agreed to the following resolution:

S. RES. 443

In the Senate of the United States, April 25, 2006.

Whereas Francis R. (Frank) Valeo served with distinction as chief of the Foreign Affairs Division of the Legislative Reference Service and specialist in the Far East, before beginning his service to the United States Senate in 1952 on the staff of the Committee on Foreign Relations;

Whereas Frank Valeo in 1958 became foreign policy advisor and assistant to the Majority Whip, Senator Mike Mansfield, and then served as Majority Secretary from 1963 to 1966;

Whereas Frank Valeo served as Secretary of the Senate from 1966 to 1977;

Whereas Frank Valeo accompanied many United States Senators on missions to all parts of the globe, assisted the Majority Leader in regularly reporting on conditions in Southeast Asia, and was part of the first congressional delegation to visit the People's Republic of China in 1972;

Whereas Frank Valeo represented the United States Senate on the Federal Election Commission from 1974 to 1977, and in that role participated in the 1976 landmark Supreme Court decision of *Buckley v. Valeo*;

Whereas Frank Valeo helped to modernize and set professional standards for service in the diverse offices that report to the Secretary of the Senate, and served as a member of the Commission on the Operation of the Senate, from 1975 to 1976, where he helped craft its proposals for structural and technological reforms in Senate operations;

Whereas Frank Valeo faithfully discharged the difficult duties and responsibilities of a wide variety of important and demanding positions in public life with honesty, integrity, loyalty, and humanity; and

Whereas Frank Valeo's clear understanding and appreciation of the challenges facing the nation have left his mark on those many areas of public life: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That (a) the Senate has heard with profound sorrow and deep regret the announcement of the death of Frank Valeo.

(b) The Secretary of the Senate shall communicate these resolutions of the House of Representatives and transmit an enrolled copy thereof to the family of the deceased.

(c) When the Senate adjourns today, it shall stand adjourned as a further mark of respect to the memory of Frank Valeo.

The message also announced that pursuant to section 276d-276g of title 22, United States Code, as amended, the Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, appoints the following Senators to serve as members of the Senate Delegation to the Canada-United States Interparliamentary Group during the Second Session of the One Hundred Ninth Congress:

The Senator from Colorado (Mr. ALLARD).

The Senator from Ohio (Mr. VOINOVICH).

The message also announced that pursuant to section 276d-276g of title 22, United States Code, as amended, the Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, appoints the following Senators to serve as members of the Senate Delegation to the Canada-United States Interparliamentary Group during the Second Session of the One Hundred Ninth Congress:

The Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY).

The Senator from Hawaii (Mr. AKAKA).

The message also announced that pursuant to Public Law 105-292, as amended by Public Law 106-55, and as further amended by Public Law 107-228, the Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore, upon the recommendation of the Democratic Leader, appoints the following individual to the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom:

Preeti D. Bansal of Nebraska for a term of two years (May 15, 2006 to May 14, 2008).

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. CAPITO). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later today.