HONORING HOWARD A. CHRISTIANSON

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

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and celebrate Howard A. Christianson, a resident of Washington's Second Congressional District, whose life has been defined by his service to his country, his family and his community. I congratulate Mr. Christianson on receiving the first-ever Stillaguamish Senior Center Lifetime Achievement Award.

My hometown of Arlington, Washington, has benefited from 25 years of Mr. Christianson's vision and guidance as a city councilman, mayor and city administrator. His legacy of leadership extends beyond his public service to civic service as well.

He has been active in the Kiwanis Club, American Legion, VFW and the Shriners, and his years of work with the Masonic Lodge have inspired leaders to name the lodge's new citizen of the year award the Howard A. Christianson Outstanding Citizenship Award.

Madam Speaker, we should all be so fortunate to have community members back home in our districts who so visibly represent the meaning of service and leadership. At a time when many Americans are feeling disengaged from their communities and their leaders, Howard Christianson stands out as a shining example of why we must continue to serve and to lead for the sake of our country and for our communities.

□ 1030

HONORING SPEAKER HASTERT

(Mrs. BIGGERT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. BIGGERT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to add my voice to the many here this morning in support of our Speaker and my neighbor from Illinois, DENNIS HASTERT.

In so doing, I would ask three questions: Is the price of leadership defamation of character? Is the punishment for defending this body and its Members rumor, innuendo and false leaks? Is the cost of speaking the truth and upholding the Constitution greater than the need for flashy headlines?

The answer to all three must be no. Speaker HASTERT is one of the finest men I have ever known. His integrity is unquestioned. Let's stop the witch hunt, let's shake the gotcha mentality, and let's put an end to the unjust attacks on those who bear the heavy responsibility of leadership.

DO-NOTHING CONGRESS REFUSES TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT THE HIGH COST OF GAS

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

Mr. CARNAHAN. Madam Speaker, with Memorial Day approaching, it would be nice if the Republican-controlled House had actually done something about gas prices that continue to hover about $3 a gallon.

Over the past 5 years, we have seen gas prices double what they were when President Bush took office. American families are now spending about $1,500 more a year on transportation than they did 5 years ago. Gas prices are taking a big bite out of American family budgets.

And yet for 5 years, Washington Republicans have chosen to pad the pockets of Big Oil rather than provide real relief to consumers or sufficient resources for alternative energy. Last year they signed an energy bill into law that was nothing more than a $20 billion gift to Big Oil.

It is no wonder that Big Oil continues to reap record profits, including nearly $30 billion for the six largest oil companies in the first quarter of this year alone. House Republicans are unwilling to provide real relief to American consumers because of their cozy relationship with Big Oil.

Despite what Republicans claim this week, drilling in ANWR is not a solution to our energy crisis.

HONORING SPEAKER HASTERT

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

Mr. WELLER. Madam Speaker, I come to the floor to congratulate the Speaker of the House. I have known DENNY HASTERT since the late 1970s. I remember DENNY HASTERT as a high school wrestling coach, history teacher. The Yorkville Foxes would come down to our high school and pretty much beat us every year under the leadership of Coach HASTERT.

When I met DENNY HASTERT, he was a public school teacher interested in public service, thinking about running for State legislature, volunteering to campaign. Today he is Speaker of the House. One thing I have always known about DENNY HASTERT; he is respected as a listener. He is a solid leader, a man of integrity.

But I want to congratulate the Speaker, because this coming week, DENNY HASTERT will become the longest-serving Republican Speaker of the House of Representatives in the history of the United States Congress.

It is my understanding that he will also be the third-longest Speaker in the history of the United States. As a Member of the Illinois Delegation I extend my warm congratulations to DENNIS HASTERT, who has been a great Speaker of the House, a man of tremendous integrity. I salute him for his leadership to the House of Representatives and our Nation.

STUDENT SAVINGS ACT OF 2006

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

Mr. PASCRELL. Madam Speaker, in 1999, when President Bush was running for office, he made a pledge to veto any tax increase. Well, last week, he did what he said he would never do when he signed into law a tax increase for our Nation's young people.

This Congress passed and the President signed a bill that will triple tax rates for the teenagers with college savings funds. Under the new law, teenagers between the ages of 14 and 17 with investment income who had their long-term capital gains and dividends taxed at 5 percent, will now be taxed at 15.

Interest that had been taxed at 10 percent will now be taxed at as much as 35 percent. So much for savings. So much for education. So much for hypocrisy. The bill passed last week and ironically is called the Tax Increase Prevention Act.

Yet it increased taxes on students. And we have been insisting on tax cuts of billions of dollars to folks who do not need it. It is because of this outrageous tax increase that I have introduced the Student Savings Act of 2006, H.R. 5473. My legislation will be revenue neutral by effectively rescinding those tax cuts that go to those who make $1 million or more.

We should be giving our students financial incentives and not giving them tax increases.

HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS PROCESS

(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, I wanted to call attention that the House Appropriations Committee, working on a bipartisan basis, is ahead of schedule for this year. And although that is what we should be doing, it does seem that sometimes in Washington things break down, and there is no progress that is being made.

Unfortunately, a lot of that is happening in the other body. And then the House doesn't get credit for it. We have had some very good debate on the appropriations bills. We will have them under budget and on time. We are having a lot of push-back from some of our Members about, well, you need to cut this item out of it because there is pork here; there is pork there.

And I can say this, that in a $2-trillion-plus budget, you can always find lots to criticize about it. I think we should always be on the lookout for more things to cut. But just to take an example, the agriculture bill, we cut 35 different programs out of it, we reduced spending, and we did it on a bipartisan basis.

So often as Members get up to grandstand over one or two particular