At this point, I will insert in the RECORD an exchange of letters between the chairman of the Commerce and Energy Committee and the chairman of the Science Committee on the issue of jurisdiction over this legislation.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE,
Washington, DC, June 29, 2006.

Hon. JOE BARTON,
Chairman, Committee on Energy and Commerce, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: I am writing to you concerning the jurisdictional interest of the Science Committee in H.R. 2730, the United States-Israel Energy Cooperation Act. The Science Committee acknowledges the importance of H.R. 2730 and the need for the legislation to move expeditiously. Therefore, while we have a valid claim to jurisdiction over the bill, I agree not to request a sequential referral. This, of course, is conditional on our mutual understanding that nothing in this legislation or my decision to forgo a sequential referral waives, reduces or otherwise affects the jurisdiction of the Science Committee, and that a copy of this letter and of your response will be included in the Committee report and in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD when the bill is considered on the House Floor.

The Science Committee also expects that you will support our request to be conferees on any provisions over which we have jurisdiction during any House-Senate conference on this legislation.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

SHERWOOD BOEHLERT,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE,
Washington, DC, June 29, 2006.

Hon. SHERWOOD L. BOEHLERT,
Chairman, Committee on Science, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN BOEHLERT: Thank you for your letter in regards to H.R. 2730, The United States-Israel Cooperation Act.

I acknowledge and appreciate your willingness not to exercise your jurisdiction over the bill. In doing so, I agree that your decision to forgo further action on the bill will not prejudice the Committee on Science with respect to its jurisdictional prerogatives on this legislation or similar legislation. Further, I recognize your right to request conferees on those provisions within the Committee on the Science's jurisdiction should they be the subject of a House-Senate conference on this or similar legislation.

I will include your letter and this response in the Committee Report and I look forward to working with you as the bill moves to the House Floor.

Sincerely,

JOE BARTON,
Chairman.

Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by thanking my colleagues Mr. SHERMAN and Mr. ENGEL for their work on this bill. Mr. SHERMAN was the lead cosponsor of the legislation. He has, as he mentioned, worked very hard on the issue in a prior Congress. I am pleased to have been able to work with him on this legislation in this Congress and now to bring it to fruition. I appreciate his comments that he feels the current bill is an improved version and, in any event, believe it is a very important step forward.

I also want to thank my colleague from New York for his cooperation and his support of this legislation.

I believe it is a strong piece of legislation that will help move America forward and help move Israel forward. It will enable us to partner together and to address a problem which confronts both nations in regard to our excessive dependence on foreign sources of energy.

I think it is also important to note the unique nature of this legislation, as has been discussed in the debate here today, and that is the payback provision. Lots of times, government funds research, that research is phenomenally successful, but the government never sees and the taxpayers never see a payback. I am pleased we were able to negotiate language which calls for, under this legislation, a payback provision so that if any of the work done under the auspices of these funding programs produces a financial success, the taxpayers are repaid proportionally according to their investment.

I think it is critically important legislation. I call on my colleagues to support its passage.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support H.R. 2730, the United States-Israel Energy Cooperation Act, introduced by my colleagues Congressman SHERMAN and Congressman SHADEGG.

The bill uses two existing cooperative efforts, United States-Israel Binational Science Foundation (BSF) and the United States-Israel Binational Industrial Research and Development (BIRD) Foundation, to establish a $20 million/year grant program administered by the Department of Energy. This program is intended to encourage American and Israeli businessmen and academics to pursue projects that would reduce our dependence on current energy resources and explore ways to increase energy efficiency.

Research by the Energy Information Administration of the Department of Energy has shown that the dependence of the United States on foreign oil will increase by 33 percent over the next 20 years. We are familiar with our Nation's "addiction to oil," as President Bush phrased it in the State of the Union, and the need to wean ourselves off of foreign energy dependence and onto more efficient energy resources.

As we watch the Middle East transform before our eyes once again, we must remember that in Israel we not only have a strategic ally. Israel is also a leader in technology innovation and research, a resilient and strong economic partner, and a nation that shares our interest in the development of energy alternatives development. Israel has the highest proportion in the world of scientists and engineers within the working population, as well as the highest proportion of published scientific papers and patents.

The United States and Israel share an unease about depleting energy resources, as well as a concern of the environment, and the importance of conservation initiatives. Although our politics and diplomacy are clearly actively engaged on a different stage of history in the Middle East. We must explore opportunities to increase our energy security, and pursue scientific advancements with the American and Israeli private and public sectors.

This venture is in our economic interest and our national security interest.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. SHADEGG. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. SHADEGG) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2730, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The title of the bill was amended so as to read: "To authorize funding for eligible joint ventures between United States and Israeli businesses and academic persons, to establish the International Energy Advisory Board, and for other purposes.".

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

FUEL CONSUMPTION EDUCATION ACT

Mr. SHADEGG. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5611) to provide for the establishment of a partnership between the Secretary of Energy and appropriate industry groups for the creation of a transportation fuel conservation education campaign, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 5611

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited at the "Fuel Consumption Education Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds that—

(1) today's gasoline prices are taking a severe toll on the pocketbooks of all Americans;

(2) a large number of factors contribute to the price of gasoline, including worldwide demand for crude oil, taxes, international conflicts, regional supply chains, environmental regulations, and refining capacity;

(3) individuals can take steps to address rising demand by using a few simple gas saving tips; and

(4) increased driving efficiency will lower the demand for gasoline and thereby lower prices in the short term.

SEC. 3. PARTNERSHIP.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Energy, through the existing programs at the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, shall enter into a partnership with interested industry groups, including groups from the automotive, gasoline refining, and oil industries, to carry out a public education campaign that provides information to United States drivers about immediate measures that may be taken to conserve transportation fuel. This public-private partnership shall include a five member advisory board, to be chaired by the Secretary or his designee, which shall include representatives from the Department of Energy, the oil industry, the automotive industry, and the Congress, to be appointed by the Secretary.

The Secretary shall appoint the advisory board not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

(b) ACCESSIBILITY.—The public information campaign under this section shall be targeted to reach the widest audience possible. The education campaign shall include television, print, Internet website, or any other method designed to maximize the dissemination of transportation fuel savings information to drivers.

(c) FUNDING.—The Secretary is authorized to expend not more than $10,000,000 to carry out this section from funds previously authorized to the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, but shall provide no more than 50 percent of the cost of carrying out this section.

SEC. 4. PARTNERSHIP ON FUEL SUPPLY FOR EVACUATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Energy, through the exisiting programs at the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, shall enter into a partnership with interested industry groups and State and local governments, including groups from the gasoline refining and marketing industries, to carry out an education campaign that provides information to the State and local governments and the private sector about best practices to ensure adequate fuel supplies during emergency evacuations. This public-private partnership shall include a five member advisory board, to be chaired by the Secretary or his designee, which shall include representatives from the Department of Energy, the gasoline refining industry, the gasoline marketing industry, a State government, and a unit of local government. The Secretary shall appoint the advisory board not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

(b) FUNDING.—The Secretary is authorized to expend not more than $3,000,000 to carry out this section from funds previously authorized to the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. SHADEGG) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SHADEGG. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on this legislation and to insert extraneous material on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Arizona?

There was no objection.

Mr. SHADEGG. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 5611, the Fuel Consumption and Education Act.

I would begin by noting that in the debate on the last bill and, indeed, in the 1-minute speeches which occurred in this Chamber just this morning, it was noted that the cost of gasoline across America is spiking. Indeed, it is imposing a severe financial burden on every single American family and on every single American business. Rightfully, the American people have asked Congress to solve this problem and to solve it quickly, and yet I think most Americans understand, indeed, survey data show that they understand, that there is no single silver bullet that we can enact and solve this problem overnight.

But, Mr. Speaker, there are steps we can take. And this legislation, the Fuel Consumption and Education Act, takes one of those important steps. The rising cost of gasoline is a hardship, and this bill goes right at how we might address that hardship, and that is to reduce unnecessary demand for gasoline and gasoline products through a cooperative effort to understand how we can reduce that demand.

Indeed, the problem of high cost is, in part, specifically that, a result of excessive demand and inadequate or insufficient supply. This bill establishes a fuel conservation public service education campaign aimed at lowering demand for gasoline in the short term. And, indeed, it can work. Using mass media to influence energy consumption behavior across the country has been proven to work in the past.

□ 1400

Let me give you some examples.

In January of 2000, increased energy demand led to rolling blackouts in California. A part of the effort to combat those rising energy costs and to avoid rolling blackouts was a government-funded, public-private cooperative campaign undertaken to help reduce demand. Over the course of the year, Californians reduced peak demand by 89 percent. That is a fact. That is not a mistake. Californians, through this education program, reduced peak demand by 89 percent. They reduced total consumption by 6.7 percent in that year.

There are many things that can be done to reduce consumption, from properly inflating the tires of a vehicle, to making sure that the engine is tuned, to making sure that the air cleaner for the vehicle is replaced when it should be, to making sure that the fuel filter for the vehicle is replaced when it should be.

Mr. Speaker, there are many steps that we can take, that the average consumer, the average automobile driver does not understand and does not routinely do. All of that causes demand to go up, and all of that forces prices higher.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation. I believe it is critically important. I want to commend my colleague from Texas, Mr. CONAWAY, for introducing this legislation and bringing it forward. It is the kind of step that we can do immediately to address both our excessive demand and the high prices.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 5611, the Fuel Conservation Education Act. Again, I find myself agreeing with my friend from Arizona in everything he said, which is why the bill is having strong support from all the members of the Energy and Commerce Committee on both sides of the aisle.

Mr. Speaker, during this time of record gasoline prices, over $3 a gallon in my home State of New York and in most States of this Union, we have to be smarter about the way we conserve energy. As individuals, we have a responsibility to make informed choices about what we drive, how we drive and what fuel we put in our cars.

In a recent Energy and Commerce Committee markup, our committee considered several bills to help consumers make decisions about how to improve the fuel economy of their cars. One of these was H.R. 5611, the Fuel Conservation Education Act, which we are debating today, which will direct the Department of Energy to establish a public-private partnership with industry on a conservation education program and campaign, teaching drivers about simple steps they can take to achieve real results. Education is clearly a necessary component of our national commitment to improving fuel economy.

During the same committee markup, our committee considered a bill by Congressman SHIMKUS, Congressman ALLEN and myself that would establish a National Tire Education Program. Right now, consumers have no way of knowing how efficient the replacement tires they purchase are or even that proper maintenance of tires will improve the fuel economy of these tires and of their automobile. It has been estimated that you can improve fuel economy by anywhere from 1 to 3 percent per year if tires are kept properly inflated. This could lead to savings of 1 to 2 billion gallons of fuel per year.

So it is all about education, and that is what this bill is about.

So, Mr. Speaker, while we must work on long-term solutions to our energy challenges that will have a significant impact on gasoline prices, we should also promote programs in the short term that will empower individuals to make informed choices about fuel economy. That is what this bill does, and that is why I urge the adoption of H.R. 5611 today.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SHADEGG. Mr. Speaker, I yield 8 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY), the author of this legislation.

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that high praise indeed. I appreciate members of the Energy and Commerce Committee moving this bill along and moving it to the floor today with bipartisan support. I also want to thank the cosponsors of the bill, FRED UPTON, RALPH HALL, ED TOWNS and GENE GREEN, who helped work on this modest attempt to address the usage of gasoline in this country.

Several speakers ahead of us this morning during the one minutes spoke very eloquently about the rising cost of

gasoline. I think yesterday there was a report that it hit a record $3.02 a gallon on average across the United States. It seems as though we as consumers will begin to make decisions at $3 a gallon that we won't make at $2 a gallon, decisions we ought to make at $2 a gallon, but the concern about the money is not there in our heads to make that happen.

This effort of a joint public-private educational effort has shown results in the past, as Mr. SHADEGG has already mentioned, in California, the dramatic results they had; people just making informed decisions, decisions that they ought to make day in and day out, but they don't.

There is a recent headline in the USA Today which said natural gas prices, not gasoline prices, but natural gas prices went down dramatically. Let me read one sentence out of that. ''Prices have fallen because natural gas supplies are far above normal after a mild winter and lower demand, leading to an inventory surge.''

Here is what we are trying to effect. If each one of us, each of us who drives a car in America this coming week and for the foreseeable future, would use just one gallon less of gasoline, you would see that impact. Inventories would begin to surge, and the prices would come down.

When I am out at town halls and other places in the district, even from a district that represents Midland and Odessa, the crude oil and natural gas production capital of the world, that may be a bit over the top, but, nevertheless, an awful lot of crude oil produced in West Texas, even there, people complain about high gasoline prices.

If all of us would collectively do small things, Mr. SHADEGG mentioned a couple of those, several of them, we could have a dramatic impact on total gasoline demand. As demand goes down, inventories would rise; and as those inventories go up, the law of supply and demand takes over and the prices go down.

We would have two benefits from that. One, the benefit we would get directly by actually spending less money on the gasoline for powering our cars; and then collectively we would benefit, the economy benefits as well as the ecology benefits.

2004, the last time we had statistics on that, we drove in America 2,962 billion miles, vehicle miles. You add all the cars up, the 243 million registered cars and trucks in this country, collectively we drove those many miles. With a volume of that size, modest reductions in the usage of gasoline or modest improvements in the efficiency of the usage of that gasoline can yield dramatic results.

Each one of us, on average, drives about 12,000 miles a year. It works out to about 234 miles a week. If we could begin to do the things that would improve the efficiency with which we drive those miles, or simply drive a few miles less, on average, it is about 17 miles to the gallon. If we just drove next week 17 miles less in our car than we did this week, if all of us did it, then the impact we want to achieve on this would begin to happen.

We are going to try to begin to convince the American gasoline users of this idea through media, print, television, Internet, Web sites, a variety of ways, to communicate the benefits of being smarter when you drive. Benefits like driving sensibly. If you are an aggressive driver, if you accelerate aggressively from stop signs and run the tachometer on your car above 2,000 RPMs, you will use more gasoline than you need to. So if you make a conscious effort to keep your tachometer below 2,000 RPMs a minute, you will use dramatically less gasoline. On average, the savings would be between 5 and 30 percent, which would save up to between 8 and 52 billion gallons of gasoline a year.

If you observe the speed limit, something that we all do here in this body, I am sure, religiously, but if you simply observe the speed limit, you could save economy fuel benefits between 7 and 23 percent, another 12 to 40 billion gallons of gasoline a year.

Excessive weight. These are some small things that most of us don't think about. But all that extra stuff that you haul around in the trunk of your car that ought to be stored in the garage, if you will take that weight out, you will improve your gasoline efficiency. In fact, the smaller your car, the greater that weight, then the differential is even bigger. So take all that extra weight out of the trunk of your car, and you will have savings there.

If you also keep your car tuned and the filters changed, there are dramatic savings in those regards as well. Keeping the tires inflated, our colleague on the other side has mentioned the importance of tires and the impact that they have.

So every one of these issues, each of us can choose to do our own. Particularly on our side of the aisle, we talk an awful lot about less government regulation, freedoms and personal choices. That is what we are talking about here. These are personal choices that you and I can make, not walking into work or not riding bicycles, not doing draconian kinds of things that really aren't going to work in the long run, but smart things that we can do, day in and day out, to begin to form a habit that allows us to use a little bit less gasoline than we would have otherwise used and also to keep money that we would spend on that gasoline.

So I encourage my colleagues to support this legislation. It is a modest attempt to address the problem. The overall problem of gasoline costs and usage in this country needs a long-term solution. This is not what that is about. This is about something we can begin to do today and tomorrow to affect this problem.

So I appreciate the Energy and Commerce Committee moving this bill forward, and I appreciate the sponsors that have helped with it.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GENE GREEN).

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am a proud cosponsor of H.R. 5611. I serve on the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and I am glad our committee reported this bill to the floor.

It does basically two things: One, it creates these public-private partnerships so we can deal with the demand side. That benefits all Americans. I am honored to represent a district where we make a lot of gasoline that fuels our cars, but we also have to pay that high price at the pump. We can control our own destiny if we use public-private partnerships that this bill will allow between the Department of Energy and different groups. They will really help to show how we can lower our number of miles we need to drive and do a lot of other things, some of them are being done right now.

Making the Department of Energy more proactive with these private-public partnerships, will lower our demand side and hopefully lower our individual costs we have to pay for fuel. Also, if we lower demand, the price will come down. Because the reason we are paying over $3 a gallon, at least in my area and some areas of the country, is because of the high demand.

The other part of the bill I think is really good, and I am glad Mr. CONAWAY included it, the partnership on fuel supply for evacuations. I don't think there is any secret that in the Houston-Harris County area last year when Rita just barely missed us, it went to the east and hit both Congressman TED POE's district and Congressman KEVIN BRADY's, but we were concerned enough that we had almost 2 million people trying to evacuate, and the supply side for evacuations was not there.

The State of Texas and our local community is doing some planning now in anticipation. But, in hindsight, it really is the Department of Energy's responsibility to be able to look at this and make sure that in emergencies we have a plan in place for supply for evacuations but also after the fact.

In the Houston area, we have a number of refineries, and we actually shut those down because we thought Rita was going to be in the Houston Ship Channel and we were going to have 5 feet of water in those refineries. To get that refining capacity back up, we have to have some assistance; and I want the DOE to be a partner in that.

I support the bill and thank you, Mr. CONAWAY, for introducing it.

Mr. SHADEGG. Mr. Speaker, at this time I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. ROGERS).

Mr. ROGERS of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman. I appreciate it.

I want to compliment Mr. CONAWAY from Texas for his introduction and

pushing this bill, H.R. 5611, to the forefront. It is an important part of what we are doing in this House.

We get to the point where Asia has used more oil last year than North America, and India is yet to come online fully in its oil consumption. There is only going to be more pressure on the oil produced around the world.

So this House has taken some important steps to try to steady our supply. We have invested in the policy changes for domestic production and expansion of our refinery capability. We have invested in alternative fuels, not only in research and development but trying to make sure there is refining capability for ethanol across the country.

Lastly, we talk about conservation, when I recall back to being a young child and my parents coming home and telling us about President Nixon's challenge to every American to lower their thermostat in their house to help conserve energy, and it worked.

What this bill does is really present some very commonsense options for all of us that we get to follow. It is a true partnership from all of the players who have really the most to gain by conservation. It will lower demand, number one; and it will reduce our dependency on foreign oil, number two. They are small, commonsense things that we can do individually that add up to big solutions. That is what is important about this bill.

Just a few examples, Mr. Speaker, if I may. Replacing your clogged air filter can improve your car's gas mileage by as much as 10 percent. You can improve gas mileage by around 3 percent by keeping your tires inflated to the proper pressure. You can increase your gas mileage by 2 percent by using the recommended grade of motor oil by your car's manufacturer.

These are commonsense, simple things. But Americans need to understand how important those small things are in adding up to big savings of barrels of oil consumed every year, which means, at the end of the day, lower prices, less dependence on foreign oil.

□ 1415

Every family has sat at the table and talked about the consumption of their budget by gas prices. If you stop to fill up your pump on the way to take your kids to school, or to go to work, or run an errand, you know how painful it is today.

If we continue on the path of this House with good energy policy and domestic supply and alternative fuels, and individual conservation, Mr. Speaker, we will ensure that we have an energy supply for the future that is both affordable and meets the demands of an American economy that is on the move.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY).

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, this bill that we are debating right now was supposed to be a part of a comprehensive Republican Energy Week that we were going to have here at the end of July, showing how committed the Republican Party was to dealing with the energy crisis in our country.

And this is energy week for the Republicans, although I would spell ''weak,'' w-e-a-k, because that is really what this bill is. This is a conservation, efficiency, education bill.

Now, it turns out that if you go to the Department of Energy Web site, you find out that they are already doing almost everything that is in this bill. It is already on their Web site. What I think the American people understand is that they should not expect the Republican Party to actually stand up to do something about energy efficiency.

Because, after all, we put 70 percent of all of the oil which we consume into gasoline tanks. So you would think that they would be out here on the floor, we would be having a huge debate about how to increase the fuel economy for the automotive fleet in our country, which has gone backwards over the last 20 years, to a standard that we met in 1981.

Now, the problem is that America now imports 61 percent of all of the oil which we consume. We put 70 percent of that oil into gasoline tanks. Now, if we just improve the fuel economy standards for our country to 33 miles per gallon over the next 10 years, that would be all of the oil that we actually import from the Persian Gulf. Thirty-three miles per gallon is all of the oil from the Persian Gulf.

Instead, we are back down at 25 miles per gallon in the United States, with this huge challenge knowing that the United States only has 3 percent of the oil reserves in the world.

So this bill out here educating the public as to how to drive their vehicle better or inflate their tires, that is all fine. But it is already out there. The Department of Energy is already doing it. Consumers are already trying to save the price of gasoline at the pump, because they know that OPEC and the oil industry is tipping them upside down and shaking money out of their pockets every time they go in to refill their tank.

By the way, when it comes to appliances, when it comes to electric consumption in our country, the Bush administration, over the first 6 years, has yet to promulgate a regulation on making the devices which we use in our country more efficient. They keep putting it back and back and back. And what they do is they tell us that the first one might be issued in September of 2007, and the last of the backlogged standards will not come out until 2011 and will not go into effect until 2016.

That will be the energy efficiency legacy of the Bush administration, of the Republicans, because, ladies and gentlemen, all of the coal-fired, oil-fired, nuclear-fired power plants that are built in America are nothing more than that electrical generation which is built so that we can plug in toasters, refrigerators, stoves, computers, have light bulbs go on.

But the Bush administration does not want to ensure that the industries that make these devices have to make them more efficient. So as a result we have more pollution, more health problems, and when it comes to automobiles and the importation of 70 percent of the oil, which we consume, by the way it was only 30 percent of the oil that we consumed in 1975 at the first oil crisis.

We are now up to 61 percent getting deeper and deeper. Since the Republicans took over the Congress in 1995, we have gone from 45 percent dependence on imported oil to 61 percent dependence upon imported oil, a 16 percent increase. Goes up about 1½ percent every year that the Republicans control the House and the Senate, and it really accelerates when they take over the Presidency, which they have had for the last 6 years.

They are saying today that they are not going to do anything about the fuel economy standards for SUVs and for automobiles. They are not going to improve the efficiency over the next 10 years, next 20 years, no plan in place. Same thing is true for the appliances which we use, the devices which consume electricity, no plan. But you can go to the Web site. That is what their bill will do. You can find out how to make more efficient the inefficient devices which you now have. That is the plan.

Mr. Speaker, I will tell you it is about as dangerous an abdication of responsibility on any issue that our country has ever seen. We just had the new President of Iraq address the Congress today. Is there a connection between the volatility in the price of oil for Americans at the gas pump and his presence here today?

The pictures that we see every night in Lebanon? All of it is related to the unfortunately crazy, speculative marketplace that is now opening up on the price of oil, because people believe that chaos is breaking out. Who is the victim? Each and every American who has to pay these exorbitantly high prices for energy because there is no Republican energy plan.

This is energy week for the Republicans, w-e-a-k. That is what we have on the floor debated this afternoon. I urge a ''no'' vote on this ineffectual, redundant, unnecessary piece of legislation.

Mr. SHADEGG. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON).

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I guess it was about 2 months or so ago that my friend and colleague from the good State of Texas (Mr. CONAWAY) came up to me with a piece of legislation that he thought would really help consumers, an education plan that promoted, in fact, could save lots of gasoline that we would not have to import.

Mr. CONAWAY wanted to do this the right way. He said, you know, this is such a good idea, obviously it is going to be referred to the Energy and Commerce Committee. He wanted it to be bipartisan. And as a new Member, he was not quite sure what his relationship was with some of the members on our committee, particularly on the other side of the aisle.

He asked for some advice. And he went and shopped that piece of legislation before he introduced it. As it turned out, he got every person that he asked to be a cosponsor of the bill.

Now, Mr. TOWNS, Mr. GENE GREEN, a whole number of different Members. The bill moved through our committee. And it passed without dissent. Had a hearing. It passed without dissent and here it is today.

Mr. Speaker, we have an energy crisis. We do. There is a host of things that we as individuals can do ourselves to help our own family budget, particularly as it relates to the fuel efficiency of our vehicles.

Some of us know some of these things already: Going the speed limit, removing the excess weight. But a whole number of different things, and, yes, the Department of Energy talks about it on its Web site. I think we can do a better job. That is what this bill is about, how can we do better?

Working with industry, working with the Department of Energy, working with our constituents trying to promote a whole number of things that collectively make an awful lot of sense. But the bottom line is that we can save, perhaps, if we did them all, if we were in violation of all of these things, perhaps save us as much as 25 or 30 percent of the income that we otherwise use for gasoline.

Mr. Speaker, I would urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan legislation. I endorse wholeheartedly what our colleague, Mr. CONAWAY, does. I would like to think that it will pass with a very strong vote this afternoon.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to our Democratic whip, my friend, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER).

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I think this bill, the Fuel Conservation Education Act, is a worthwhile piece of legislation. I am going to support it. This bill calls for a public education campaign by the Department of Energy and industry groups to provide U.S. motorists with information about measures that they may take to conserve fuel. I think that is important information.

Many of the measures, from observing speed limits to keeping tires properly inflated, of course, are already well known.

I believe that even the cosponsors of the bill acknowledge that it is no substitute, however, for a real, proactive energy policy that seeks to wean our Nation from its dependence on foreign oil.

Thus, today, I want to take this occasion to call the Members' attention to legislation that seeks to do precisely that. I call it the PROGRESS Act, a program for real energy security.

I, along with others, unveiled this proposal yesterday, along with the dean of the House, Congressman DINGELL; the ranking Democrat on the Transportation Committee, Congressman OBERSTAR; and Congressmen UDALL, HERSETH, HOLT, BLUMENAUER, and SCHIFF.

In short, the PROGRESS Act seeks to initiate a robust, vigorous, focused national program, akin to the Manhattan Project, this one focused on energy independence.

The PROGRESS Act would establish a National Energy Security Commission, bringing together government, industry and academic leaders to develop consensus national goals on energy.

Well, that sounds very good, another commission. But it is, in fact, like the Base Closure Commission, because they will then submit through the President its proposals, and the Congress will have to act on those in an expedited fashion, as is true with Base Closure.

It would establish as well a new Manhattan Center for high efficiency vehicles, seeking to double the current average vehicles' efficiency, and to diversify fuel types. America, the greatest innovator on the face of the Earth, ought to be producing cars that are 60-, 70-mile-per-gallon cars, and selling them to India and China, as opposed to the other way around.

It would establish a national biofuels infrastructure development program, establishing a grant program to encourage the private sector to invest in wholesale and retail biofuel pumps, tanks, and related distribution equipment.

It will do us no good to produce biofuels if we cannot deliver them to biofuel-capable vehicles. The PROGRESS Act calls for a stimulus package to upgrade the pipeline for biofuels. You cannot ship them through pipelines, they are a different chemical make-up and they eat up pipelines.

The freight rail system, while also providing grants to promote conservation alternatives, such as public transit and commuter rail, the freight rail systems are critical.

This bill would also increase the use of alternative fuels in Federal fleets. Federal fleets are the largest users of petroleum products in the world. The largest single user in the world. Many of our vehicles are flex fuel vehicles. The problem is, there is no delivery of flex fuel infrastructure in place, and therefore they do not use it.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the Members to review the PROGRESS Act, this program for real energy security, which will be introduced tomorrow.

□ 1430

Energy independence is inextricably linked to our national security, our economic well-being and our environmental integrity. So, from a security point of view on national security, from an economics point of view in terms of the growth of our economy and from an environmental standpoint, we must apply America's technological capability to producing clean-burning alternative fuels that are energy efficient and sell them to China and India. Because if China and India do not have that capability as well, they will choke us to death. So it is not just what we do but what these two behemoth societies, growing industrial societies in our globe are doing. We must act now.

That is the point the gentleman from Massachusetts was making. I disagree with him on whether we are for or against this bill. I am going to vote for this bill. There is nothing wrong with this bill. Educating consumers is a good thing to do. To the extent that they are more knowledgeable in saving fuel, that is a positive step for us to take; and I am going to vote for it.

But the point that the gentleman from Massachusetts was making is it is not enough nor is it a substitute for very focused, comprehensive action. That is what the PROGRESS Act is all about. I hope that you will look at it, and I hope that you can help us pass it, perhaps not this year but in the very early part of the next session of the Congress of the United States.

Mr. SHADEGG. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FITZPATRICK).

Mr. FITZPATRICK of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise as one Member on this side of the aisle that in the past has supported Mr. MARKEY's calls for increased fuel efficiency standards and voted for his amendments but believe that it would be foolish to so vote and not also support this demand side plan presented by Mr. CONAWAY from Texas, which also has a proven track record, and urge my colleagues to support H.R. 5611, the Fuel Education Conservation Act.

I just want to point out one fact, that, over one year, Californians reduced peak demand by 89 percent and total consumption by 6.7 percent. I would submit, if we can do it in California, we can do it across America. So I would urge my colleagues to support the bill.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers. Again, I urge our colleagues to support the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SHADEGG. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this bill. It is a constructive suggestion. And I am sorry to say that at least at one point in this debate it was proven that any issue, sadly, any issue that is brought to this floor can be made partisan.

It seems to me that the famous quote by Roosevelt applies here, and that is that it is always easy to point out how the strong man stumbled or how the doer of deeds might have done them

better. It is always possible to come in and say, well, this isn't good enough. You should have done this. You should have done that.

But, as that quote suggests, the credit belongs not to the critic but to the man who is in the arena struggling and trying to do the right thing. In this case, Mr. Speaker, that is my colleague, Mr. CONAWAY of Texas.

Now, some people say facetiously, oh, this is energy week for the Republicans; and they criticize that we haven't done enough. I would note that some of those people oppose drilling in ANWR where we might find additional resource. They oppose even rational proposals to do offshore drilling. They oppose rational proposals called for by the industry to incentivize additional refineries.

Indeed, I worked very hard to increase hydroelectric energy; and the same people who are today here criticizing this bill opposed the construction of additional hydroelectric production facilities. Indeed, they say we should tear down existing dams that produce hydroelectric energy.

One of the speakers on this bill said, well, this really is unnecessary. Indeed, it is a waste of time. Because in point of fact there is already an Energy Department Web site which tells consumers this information.

Well, unfortunately, that misapprehends what this bill does. This bill doesn't just create a Web site. This bill calls for a cooperative effort to advertise to American consumers what they can do.

Perhaps the gentleman who made that argument knows that every single person residing in his congressional district understands already that using their cruise control on the highway can help maintain a constant speed and save gas.

Perhaps the gentleman understands, or in his congressional district every single consumer understands, that aggressive driving can reduce mileage by 33 percent.

Presumably, in that particular Member's district, every single member observes the speed limit and understands that for each five miles per hour over the 60 miles an hour that you drive, you are increasing the cost of gasoline by 21 cents a gallon.

Perhaps, indeed, I assume, every single consumer in that congressional district understands that a single 100 pounds of extra weight in your vehicle can cost you an additional 2 percent each year.

Perhaps in that congressional district every consumer understands that fixing a car that is not timed properly can save you 4 percent of the gasoline you need to consume. Indeed, fixing a serious maintenance problem can save you 40 percent.

And perhaps every consumer in that congressional district understands that if you keep your tires properly inflated you will save 3.3 percent.

But I would suggest that not all Americans do understand those things. I would suggest that this is good legislation. I would suggest that it is indeed the right thing to do, to help educate consumers; and I am, quite frankly, stunned that an opponent would come to the floor and say we do not need to educate America's consumers on the cost of excessive consumption of gasoline.

This is good legislation. I commend the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY) for his effort. I appreciate the support of some of my colleagues on the other side, and I urge that all of the Members pass this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BONILLA). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. SHADEGG) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5611, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The title of the bill was amended so as to read: ''A Bill to authorize a partnership between the Secretary of Energy and appropriate industry groups for the creation of a transportation fuel conservation education campaign, and for other purposes.''.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

DELETING ONLINE PREDATORS ACT OF 2006

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5319) to amend the Communications Act of 1934 to require recipients of universal service support for schools and libraries to protect minors from commercial social networking websites and chat rooms, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 5319

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Deleting Online Predators Act of 2006''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds that—

(1) sexual predators approach minors on the Internet using chat rooms and social networking websites, and, according to the United States Attorney General, one in five children has been approached sexually on the Internet;

(2) sexual predators can use these chat rooms and websites to locate, learn about, befriend, and eventually prey on children by engaging them in sexually explicit conversations, asking for photographs, and attempting to lure children into a face to face meeting; and

(3) with the explosive growth of trendy chat rooms and social networking websites, it is becoming more and more difficult to monitor and protect minors from those with devious intentions, particularly when children are away from parental supervision.

SEC. 3. CERTIFICATIONS TO INCLUDE PROTECTIONS AGAINST COMMERCIAL SOCIAL NETWORKING WEBSITES AND CHAT ROOMS.

(a) CERTIFICATION BY SCHOOLS.—Section 254(h)(5)(B) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 254(h)(5)(B)) is amended by striking clause (i) and inserting the following:

''(i) is enforcing a policy of Internet safety for minors that includes monitoring the on-line activities of minors and the operation of a technology protection measure with respect to any of its computers with Internet access that—

''(I) protects against access through such computers to visual depictions that are—

''(aa) obscene;

''(bb) child pornography; or

''(cc) harmful to minors; and

''(II) protects against access to a commercial social networking website or chat room unless used for an educational purpose with adult supervision; and''.

(b) CERTIFICATION BY LIBRARIES.—Section 254(h)(6)(B) of such Act (47 U.S.C. 254(h)(6)(B)) is amended by striking clause (i) and inserting the following:

''(i) is enforcing a policy of Internet safety that includes the operation of a technology protection measure with respect to any of its computers with Internet access that—

''(I) protects against access through such computers to visual depictions that are—

''(aa) obscene;

''(bb) child pornography; or

''(cc) harmful to minors; and

''(II) protects against access by minors without parental authorization to a commercial social networking website or chat room, and informs parents that sexual predators can use these websites and chat rooms to prey on children; and''.

(c) DEFINITIONS.—Section 254(h)(7) is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

''(J) COMMERCIAL SOCIAL NETWORKING WEBSITES; CHAT ROOMS.—Within 120 days after the date of enactment of the Deleting Online Predators Act of 2006, the Commission shall by rule define the terms 'social networking website' and 'chat room' for purposes of this subsection. In determining the definition of a social networking website, the Commission shall take into consideration the extent to which a website—

''(i) is offered by a commercial entity;

''(ii) permits registered users to create an on-line profile that includes detailed personal information;

''(iii) permits registered users to create an on-line journal and share such a journal with other users;

''(iv) elicits highly-personalized information from users; and

''(v) enables communication among users.''.

(d) DISABLING DURING ADULT OR EDUCATIONAL USE.—Section 254(h)(5)(D) of such Act is amended—

(1) by inserting ''OR EDUCATIONAL'' after ''DURING ADULT'' in the heading; and

(2) by inserting before the period at the end the following: ''or during use by an adult or by minors with adult supervision to enable access for educational purposes pursuant to subparagraph (B)(i)(II)'' .

SEC. 4. FTC CONSUMER ALERT ON INTERNET DANGERS TO CHILDREN.

(a) INFORMATION REGARDING CHILD PREDATORS AND THE INTERNET.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Federal Trade Commission shall—

(1) issue a consumer alert regarding the potential dangers to children of Internet child predators, including the potential danger of commercial social networking websites and chat rooms through which personal information about child users of such websites may be accessed by child predators; and

(2) establish a website to serve as a resource for information for parents, teachers and school administrators, and others regarding the potential dangers posed by the