

THE OMINOUS OMNIBUS BILL

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

Mr. PENCE. At 3,500 pages, 34 pounds, members of the minority had roughly 1 day to review its contents. Mr. Speaker, here comes the bus. But the American people don't want this Congress to get on. Last night, the House passed a massive omnibus spending bill that gives deafening evidence that this government is broken. This budget process is broken.

I want to commend men and women of good will in this Congress who improved this bill along the margins, but \$515 billion without a penny for Iraq is wrong and evidence that the budget process is broken. \$515 billion with \$10 billion in budget gimmicks and hundreds of unexamined earmarks gives evidence that this budget process is broken.

President Reagan said it 20 years ago from this podium. He said: "The budget process is broken down; it needs a drastic overhaul. With each ensuing year, the spectacle before the American people is the same as it was this Christmas." He added: "Budget deadlines delayed or missed completely, hundreds of billions worth of spending packed into one bill, and a Federal Government on the brink of default."

The more things change in Congress, the more they stay the same. Say "no" to the ominous omnibus bill.

OMNIBUS SPENDING BILL ADDRESSES INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS

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

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support the passage of this year's omnibus appropriation bill which covers 11 appropriations bills that were passed by the House of Representatives earlier this year. The omnibus appropriation bill includes language from my bill, H.R. 2431, the Border Infrastructure and Technology Modernizations Act of 2007, which authorizes appropriations for a nationwide strategy to address infrastructure needs at the land ports of entry.

The language from H.R. 2431 that was included in the homeland security section of this bill requires an assessment to study to identify ports of entry infrastructure and technology improvement projects to minimize border-crossing wait times at our Nation's ports of entry. I worked in a bipartisan way with my cosponsor of this legislation, Congressman REHBERG, and I want to thank him for his leadership on this effort.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to give my sincere thanks to the chairman, Mr. OBEY, of the House Appropriations Committee and Chairman PRICE for including this language.

FINAL OMNIBUS BILL IS A SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT OVER THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET REQUEST

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

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, we need a tear-down reform of our national health care system. But until we do that, we have an obligation to fund the providers and institutions that make our system work despite the system. That is why I am so proud of the budget passed by the House last night.

President Bush's budget would have required cuts of 800 grants for medical research at the National Institutes of Health. He would also cut programs that provide access to health care by \$595 million and rural health care initiatives by more than 50 percent. We rejected those cuts last night in a bipartisan fashion. We approved a bill that included \$607 million above the President's request for critical medical research. And we approved money for community health centers so that they can provide access to 280,000 more uninsured Americans. Finally, we approved \$147 million above the President's budget request for rural health care for those critical access projects.

Mr. Speaker, the health of the United States is stronger today because of the budget we passed last night.

THE ENERGY INDEPENDENCE AND SECURITY ACT

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

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, today the House will be voting on the Energy Independence and Security Act. With this legislation, the new Democratic Congress is leading America in a new direction on energy policy, the most significant energy bill in a generation. We are taking a major step toward ending our dependence on foreign oil by increasing efficiency standards for cars and trucks for the first time in 30 years. This will reduce America's need for oil by 1.1 million gallons per day, cut millions of tons of global warming pollution, and save families up to \$1,000 every year.

The bill implements landmark energy efficiency standards for appliances, lighting and buildings, which will save American families and businesses billions of dollars in unnecessary energy costs. Finally, the bill boosts the production of environmentally protective home-grown bio-fuels such as cellulosic ethanol.

We can and we will do more: promote solar, wind and other renewable energy sources, for example. But this legislation finally begins to address high gas prices, America's oil addiction and the global warming crisis. It will help cre-

ate hundreds of thousands of jobs in clean energy technologies. So I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting a new direction of energy. Vote for H.R. 6.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF CONGRESSWOMAN JULIA CARSON

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

Mr. ELLSWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in sadness, but also to honor the life and memory of the gentlewoman from Indiana that passed this week, Congresswoman JULIA CARSON. JULIA will be remembered as a political trailblazer, a tireless advocate and dedicated public servant to the people of Indiana.

Her life was a shining example of the power of the American Dream: rising from the humble beginnings of poverty and segregation to become a leading champion for civil rights, women's rights and the working poor in this House. She leaves behind a legacy of standing up for those most vulnerable among us. But most of all, JULIA accomplished what we should all strive to do. She left the world a better place than what she found it. She will be deeply missed by this House, by me, and by the people of Indiana. Our thoughts and prayers are with her family and friends during this difficult time.

PRESIDENT BUSH IS OUT OF TOUCH WHEN HE SAYS THE AMERICAN ECONOMY IS STRONG

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

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, President Bush has to get out of the White House a little more often so that he can see firsthand how average Americans are struggling to make ends meet during this holiday season. Over the past 7 years, the President has presided over an economy in which the poverty rate has gone up and household incomes have gone down. The average family is making less today than they did last year, while at the same time, everyday costs for food, home heating oil, gas, college tuition and health care skyrocket out of control.

Former Fed Chairman Alan Greenspan voiced concern this weekend that the economy may be heading into a recession early next year. Despite all of these warnings, President Bush stood before the American people and proclaimed that the American economy was strong and pointed to the tax cuts of his first term as a reason for this strong economy.

Well, the President needs a reality check. It is time for the President to recognize that the struggles of average working families are here to stay and he needs to check them out. Together,

we can address those concerns, and we wish to work with him.

THE FINAL OMNIBUS BILL IS A SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT OVER THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET REQUEST

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, at the beginning of this year, the Democratic Congress proposed a 2008 budget that was both fiscally responsible and reinvested in long-forgotten domestic priorities. All year President Bush has stubbornly said that he will not sign any appropriations bill that was higher than his budget request. So after months of working with our Republican colleagues, we approved an omnibus spending bill last night that fits into the President's funding levels, but addresses important Democratic priorities.

At a time when crime rates are increasing all around our country, we invest \$1.2 billion over the President's budget to help local communities make their neighborhoods safer. At a time when significant infrastructure improvements are needed to prevent more bridges from collapsing, we invest \$1 billion to make our bridges safer. And as Americans continue to pay record prices at the pump, we invest an additional \$486 million in renewable energy and energy efficiency.

Mr. Speaker, this final omnibus bill invests in critical priorities that were ignored in the President's budget.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF SENATE AMENDMENT TO HOUSE AMENDMENT TO SENATE AMENDMENT TO H.R. 6, ENERGY INDEPENDENCE AND SECURITY ACT OF 2007

Mr. WELCH of Vermont. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 877 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 877

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to take from the Speaker's table the bill (H.R. 6) to move the United States toward greater energy independence and security, to increase the production of clean renewable fuels, to protect consumers, to increase the efficiency of products, buildings, and vehicles, to promote research on and deploy greenhouse gas capture and storage options, and to improve the energy performance of the Federal Government, and for other purposes, with the Senate amendment to the House amendment to the Senate amendment to the text, and to consider in the House, without intervention of any point of order except those arising under clause 10 of rule XXI, a motion offered by the Majority Leader or his designee that the House concur in the Senate amendment. The Senate amendment and the motion shall

be considered as read. The motion shall be debatable for one hour equally divided and controlled by the Majority Leader and the Minority Leader or their designees. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the motion to final adoption without intervening motion.

SEC. 2. During consideration of the motion to concur pursuant to this resolution, notwithstanding the operation of the previous question, the Chair may postpone further consideration of the motion to such time as may be designated by the Speaker.

SEC. 3. On the first legislative day of the second session of the One Hundred Tenth Congress, the House shall not conduct organizational or legislative business.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Vermont is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. WELCH of Vermont. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART). All time yielded during consideration of the rule is for debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WELCH of Vermont. I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H. Res. 877.

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

There was no objection.

□ 1030

Mr. WELCH of Vermont. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

H. Res. 877 provides for the consideration of the Senate amendment to the House amendment to the Senate amendment to H.R. 6, to move the United States toward greater energy independence and security, to increase the production of clean renewable fuels, to protect consumers, to increase the efficiency of products, buildings, and vehicles, and to promote research on and deploy greenhouse gas capture and storage options. In short, it's a comprehensive energy bill.

The rule makes in order a motion by the majority leader that the House concur in the Senate amendment. The rule waives all points of order against the motion except clause 10 of rule XXI. The rule provides 1 hour of debate, controlled by the majority leader and the minority leader.

Mr. Speaker, this is historic legislation. Today, we will move from a policy of dependence on foreign oil, a policy of endless drilling, to a policy of independence and efficiency. It's a policy that is overdue. It's overdue for the health of the American economy, the health of the world environment, and for the strengthening of our foreign policy options.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, the American economy is being hit very hard by spiraling fuel prices. Around the country, families are sitting around their kitchen tables wondering how they are going to afford their fuel bills this winter. In December of 2002, just a few

years ago, the price of a gallon of gas was \$1.48. It's now \$3.09. Five years ago, in Vermont it cost a family about \$600 to heat their homes. Now, it's about \$1,500.

Our current energy policy of spiraling costs, environmental degradation, and increasing dependence on people who are not particularly our friends is weakening America, harming our environment, and stretching the budgets of our families.

Mr. Speaker, this bill addresses each and every one of these problems. It's fiscally responsible. It starts by repealing some, but not all, of the big oil and gas tax giveaways and reinvests that money to ensure energy independence. It increases fuel efficiency standards, and this is probably the single most important provision of this bill. The last time this Congress increased fuel efficiency standards was 32 years ago, and since that time the American auto industry has lost market share. The cost of operating a car has increased. What this bill does, which is historic, is increase the mileage standards by 40 percent so that the fleet-wide average in 2020 will be 35 miles per gallon.

That is the first real step toward fuel efficiency in those 32 years. It's going to save American families \$700 to \$1,000 at the pump; it's going to produce \$22 billion in net annual savings for consumers by 2020; and through the application in this legislation of efficiency standards, which essentially is that you make a toaster that uses less rather than more energy, and other appliances the same, it's going to save consumers \$400 billion through 2030.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is long overdue, and it is a declaration of independence from the old energy policy that had us relying on people who were not our friends to supply us oil that we were addicted to, at prices that we could no longer afford. Today, we are going to turn the corner, and the American people are going to see direct results in our economy, in our environment, and in our security as a result of this landmark legislation.

I urge my colleagues to support the rule and the underlying bill.

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

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. I would like to thank the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. WELCH) for the time, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

It is our duty to do all we can to provide future generations a better world in which to live. Our Nation has made great strides in protecting human health and the environment, but there is still much more to do. We must continue to decrease carbon emissions and invest in multiple forms of energy-efficient technologies to help preserve the environment and lessen our dependence on foreign energy sources.

For our national security, we must make investments to increase clean energy sources and increase domestic energy supplies. From 2001 to 2006, Republican-led Congresses invested nearly \$12