

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