Mr. QUIGLEY. Madam Speaker, as we begin to consider substantial comprehensive immigration proposals, I strongly urge my colleagues to remember what it means to achieve comprehensive reform.

We cannot forget a very important immigrant group in this country, binational GLBT couples. If we are to consider here on this floor a proposal deemed ''comprehensive,'' we must truly mean everyone. We must mean it when we say that you can be an American no matter the color of your skin, your religion, or who you love.

Congressman HONDA has been courageous enough to tackle the issue of amending the Nation's immigration laws to allow U.S. citizens and permanent residents to sponsor their same-sex partners for family-based immigration through the United American Families Act.

In this debate, we have talked about keeping families together, but we cannot turn a blind eye to the children who have been taken from a family because they have two moms or two dads and one doesn't live in this country.

We talk about doing what is right, what is fair, and what is just, but we neglect to imagine the pain and suffering these families are going through because we as a government think it's our right to tell the people who they can love.

FIVE REASONS THE PRESIDENT'S APPROVAL HAS PLUMMETED

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

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Madam Speaker, the President's approval by the American people has dropped faster than any other President in over 50 years, according to Gallup. Let me offer five reasons why:

One, the President said he would cut the deficit in half; instead, it has tripled.

Two, the White House claimed the $787 billion stimulus bill would keep unemployment below 8.5 percent; instead, it has jumped to 9.8 percent.

Three, Democratic leaders told us the energy bill would cost families only $153 a year; instead, the Treasury Department admitted it could cost $1,700 a year.

Four, the President said the health care bill would be negotiated in open meetings; instead, the decisions are being made behind closed doors.

Five, the President promised that if you like your health care insurance, you can keep it; instead, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office found that, in fact, you can lose it.

Madam Speaker, it is no wonder that a majority of the American people now disagree with the President's policies, according to a recent CNN poll.

SAUDI ARABIA: MINORITY'S NEW ALLY

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

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Madam Speaker, the minority party has a new ally in its effort to obstruct clean energy legislation—the Saudi Arabian Government.

Here in the House I was proud to join my colleagues in passing legislation that would invest in clean energy technology, create new green jobs, and cut global warming pollution. Those same countries on whose foreign oil we are currently dependent are not supportive of legislation that would do these things.

As The New York Times reported on October 14—an article I will enter into the RECORD—Saudi Arabia will go to the international climate negotiations in Copenhagen with the goal of preventing ratification of an effective international treaty to reduce greenhouse gas pollution precisely because such a treaty would reduce American reliance on its oil.

The Senate is considering a bill analogous to what we already passed here in the House to cut global warming pollution and reduce our dependence on foreign oil. I hope Saudi Arabia's opposition to American energy independence will remind all of us how important it is for the Senate to act, and act now.

[From the New York Times, Oct. 14, 2009]

''STRIVING FOR NO'' IN CLIMATE TALKS

(By Andrew C. Revkin)

UNFCCC Amid the throngs at climate talks, as shown in Bali here in 2007, officials from individual countries can make a big difference. Saudi Arabia has been pinpointed as an influential player.

In doing my reporting for the story in The New York Times today on Saudi Arabia's latest maneuvers in climate treaty talks (they are reviving longstanding demands for compensation for lost oil revenue), I found an interesting paper on the oil kingdom's involvement in climate talks by Joanna Depledge, a research fellow at Cambridge University focusing on climate negotiations.

The paper, ''Striving for No: Saudi Arabia in the Climate Change Regime,'' was published last November in the journal Global Environmental Politics. It is the most comprehensive analysis I've seen of the role that Saudi Arabia and other oil exporters have played through two decades of global climate diplomacy. Dr. Depledge's conclusion is that this is a classic case of parties—in this case Saudi Arabia and other oil-rich states—getting involved in a process primarily to obstruct it. She concludes by noting hints that the oil powers appear to be shifting these days to a more constructive role.

But many observers and participants in the interim climate talks that concluded in Bangkok last week saw scant signs of a cooperative approach. And the e-mail and statements from Saudi officials that Jad Mouawad and I cited in our article appear to display a willingness by Saudi Arabia to impede a deal in Copenhagen if it does not include concrete commitments of aid and investment to offset anticipated drop in oil flows as countries try to cut emissions.

In an e-mail message to me, Dr. Depledge warned that Saudi Arabia and its lead official on climate, Mohammad al-Sabban, should not be underestimated as they pushed for financial commitments. ''I am absolutely sure that getting something on this will be a deal-breaker/maker for them,'' she wrote. ''They are quite blunt about it. It is the strategy they have followed since 1991.''

Dr. Depledge said she was hoping ''that getting something on investment'' in carbon capture and storage would ''provide a win-win way of getting them on board.''

''Al-Sabban is the most skillful and experienced negotiator in the process,'' she continued. ''Others ignore him at their peril.''

Access to the paper requires a subscription, so I will summarize its main points below. Here's part of the abstract:

A key starting point for the conduct of global negotiations under the U.N. system is that delegations are actively seeking an agreement that will meaningfully address the problem at hand. Sometimes, however, negotiations must contend with cases of obstructionism, that is, negotiators who are at the table with the aim of preventing an agreement. Given that they face no imperative of striking a deal, governments for whom ''no'' is the preferred outcome can have a disproportionately high impact on the negotiations, not only by formally blocking agreements, but on a day-to-day basis by slowing down progress or souring the atmosphere. This article examines Saudi Arabia's involvement in the climate change regime, and argues that the delegation has long played the role of obstructionist.

Dr. Depledge notes that Saudi Arabia and many other oil-exporting states only joined the Kyoto Protocol once it became clear it was going to take effect. ''Saudi Arabia acceded in time to ensure that it would become a party—and therefore able to fully influence proceedings,'' she wrote.

She described a significant contrast between the stances of Saudi Arabia and another developing country exporting fossil fuels—in this case South Africa and its coal:

Although the South African economy is more diversified than that of Saudi Arabia, it is still highly dependent on the coal sector. South Africa is the world's second-largest coal exporter, with developed countries accounting for 80 percent of its coal exports. South Africa is much poorer than Saudi Arabia, and coal is more vulnerable to climate policy than oil, given its higher carbon content and the greater availability of alternatives. South Africa, however, has adopted a more balanced view of the risks posed by climate change and mitigation measures, translating into a far more constructive role in the negotiations. Saudi Arabia has simply sought to prevent or slow down progress, either on the general thrust of the negotiations or on specific agenda items.

Dr. Depledge described signs of a shift in the oil kingdom's stance, including its endorsement of science pointing to big impacts from a building human influence on climate and commitment of money to pursue technologies for capturing carbon dioxide from the burning of fossil fuels and other new energy options.

But her conclusion was still cautionary:

The question is whether, and if so how, these developments will eventually feed through to changes in the Saudi delegation's approach to the negotiations themselves, especially leading up to the landmark Copenhagen meeting in December 2009. For now (up to the June 2008 sessions), any signs of a softening in the Saudi negotiating position remained well hidden.