

It took the House Republicans nearly a year to recognize that rising fuel prices were a national problem. They last looked at oil prices in March of 1999 and then held only the second hearing in March of 2000. There was nothing for a year from the people who control Congress.

Now, despite overwhelming evidence throughout 1999 and early 2000 that prices of gas, diesel and home heating oil were on the rise, House Republicans failed to hold even a single hearing or make a single proposal on stabilizing fuel prices, and throughout this period, they took no steps to invest in America's energy independence and economic security. But, in 1999, and I recall this well, the Republican leaders called again for the elimination of the Department of Energy and selling off the petroleum reserve.

Specifically, in April and May of last year, after OPEC's production cuts started a rise in prices, Republican leaders, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARMEY), the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) joined the Republican budget chair and 34 other Republicans to introduce H.R. 1649, the Department of Energy Abolition Act. I think the collected memory of my friends on the Republican side when they attempt to criticize the Democrats in Congress, who are not in control, or the efforts of the democratic administration to do something about it is shortsighted, to say the very least.

The ArmeY-DeLay energy bill would have eliminated the Energy Department and with it, oil conservation programs, renewable energy conservation research; it took energy policy out of the cabinet and sold off the Strategic Petroleum Reserve and the Navy's petroleum reserve. Such foresight. How much better off would we be today if we had adopted their reckless proposal?

Another ironic example for me of the Republicans dropping the ball is when the chairman of the Subcommittee on Energy and the Environment of the House Committee on Science held hearings in 1996 that attacked the Department of Energy's information administration for "Consistently overestimating the price of oil and using these 'inflated predictions' to justify increases in conservation research and development programs." The subcommittee chairman criticized the Department of Energy officials for predicting an oil crisis that could be caused by increased demand, increased imports, or instability in the Persian Gulf. The projections that drew that Republican chairman's criticism predicted that in the year 2000, the price per barrel of imported oil could be as high as \$34, and to that Republican subcommittee chair, that was outrageous. I note for the record that as of March 7 in the year 2000, the price was \$34.13.

Mr. Speaker, every day in America communities large and small are struggling with issues that define their environment, their liveability, their qual-

ity of life. Some people suggest that there is no difference between the Republicans and the Democrats, but I will tell my colleagues when it comes to the environment, the reality is stark. The Democrats in this administration and in Congress have a positive record of support and accomplishment, of sympathy and passion. The Republican ticket offers indifferent voting records, cursory performance in office, and advocacy of dangerous, even reckless, environmental policies. Our air, our water, the landscape, our precious natural resources do not have the time to survive benign neglect or malicious indifference, let alone active assault. There is a huge difference between the parties, perhaps on the environment more than any other issue. The stakes of the election for the environment could not be higher. I hope that the American public will look closely at the records and promote policies and candidates that will make our communities more livable and our families safer, healthier, and more economically secure.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION WAIVING ALL POINTS OF ORDER AGAINST MOTION TO CONCUR IN SENATE AMENDMENTS TO H.R. 940, LACKAWANNA VALLEY NATIONAL HERITAGE ACT OF 1999

Mr. DIAZ-BALART (during special order of Mr. BLUMENAUER) from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 106-873) on the resolution (H. Res. 583) providing for consideration of the Senate amendments to the bill (H.R. 940) to designate the Lackawanna Valley National Heritage Area, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION WAIVING POINTS OF ORDER AGAINST CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 4919, SECURITY ASSISTANCE ACT OF 2000

Mr. DIAZ-BALART (during special order of Mr. BLUMENAUER) from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 106-874) on the resolution (H. Res. 584) waiving points of order against the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 4919) to amend the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 and the Arms Export Control Act to make improvements to certain defense and security assistance provisions under those Acts, to authorize the transfer of naval vessels to certain foreign countries, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 5109, DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS HEALTH CARE PERSONNEL ACT OF 2000

Mr. DIAZ-BALART (during special order of Mr. BLUMENAUER) from the

Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 106-875) on the resolution (H. Res. 585) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5109) to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the personnel system of the Veterans Health Administration, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. MCNULTY) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. BROWN of Ohio, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. STRICKLAND, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. NORTON, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. UNDERWOOD, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. STABENOW, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MCGOVERN, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. ENGEL, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. FOLEY) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. FOLEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. ROHRBACHER, for 5 minutes, September 21.

SENATE ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

The SPEAKER announced his signature to enrolled bills of the Senate of the following titles:

S. 1638. An act to amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to extend the retroactive eligibility dates for financial assistance for higher education for spouses and dependent children of Federal, State, and local law enforcement officers who are killed in the line of duty.

S. 2460. An act to authorize the payment of rewards to individuals furnishing information relating to persons subject to indictment for serious violations of international humanitarian law in Rwanda, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 6 o'clock and 56 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, September 21, 2000, at 10 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

10134. A letter from the Deputy Associate Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Myclobutanol; Extension of Tolerance for Emergency Exemptions [OPP-301045; FRL-6742-6] (RIN: 2070-AB78) received September 12, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C.