

are clean fuels so that we consolidate the fuel blends we have in America. That is it. And then study and make sure we are doing it right. And if the study says there is another way to do it better, we will do that. That would be the fourth study we would have on this matter.

Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT), the majority whip and cosponsor of this legislation, for the purpose of closing.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time and for the debate.

Both my friend from Wisconsin who feels strongly about this and my friend from Maine who has come to the floor, we have had a good debate on part of this bill, but only a very small part of this bill.

I would like to make a couple of points. Some of the things that my friend from Maine pointed out that we needed, we agree that we need many of those things. In fact, that is why we have the energy bill. We voted on it again today. We voted on it in both of the last two Congresses. We clearly do need energy policy. We encourage all those on this side of the building to work hard to try to get that done. We have voted on an energy conference report now, and now we voted on a bill today that was very much like it.

This brings one significant, but not very complicated, issue to the floor. I think, in fact, the center focus of this bill is so unarguable that nobody really argued about it. We have got too many fuel blends. Refineries have needlessly become profit centers in the distribution because there are too many fuel blends out there. Nobody really challenged that concept.

I heard a lot of discussion about one principle, the waiver principle, whether that was good or not. Let me tell the Members the waiver is very good if the refinery that services their area is somehow shut down. In fact, the waiver is desperately good, and we do not have that kind of ability now to just simply allow families and commerce to continue when one of these very unique fuels is suddenly unavailable anywhere. That is what the waiver is supposed to take care of.

But really the more central focus of this bill I did not really hear any real debate on. I am encouraged by that. I hope as we move forward with all kinds of energy legislation that we take strong consensus that there are too many fuel blends. We need a study to determine how we get a smaller number, and then we need to look for ways to encourage that smaller number of blends to become the number of fuel blends that communities look at in the future. We can make this system much more efficient. We can make it work more effectively. This is not designed to solve all the energy problems in the world; but if we adopted this bill, it would reduce gas prices. That is what the title calls for. I think we moved

this debate forward today, and I appreciate everybody's participation that was part of it.

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 4545, the "Gasoline Price Reduction Act." I urge my colleagues to vote against this bill, which relaxes Clean Air Act requirements and which has not been the subject of any hearings or markups by the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

Because of the lack of hearings or markups, we have no idea whether the bill is actually necessary or whether its effect on gasoline prices will be positive or negative. We have no idea of the extent of its impact on air quality, except to note that its effect clearly cannot be positive.

This bill is very poorly drafted, which reflects the lack of input or review by anybody except its sponsors. We do not know what the benefits and cost of this bill will be and we do not have any analysis from the executive agencies, such as the Department of Energy and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), who could tell us whether it is a good or bad idea.

The bill allows EPA to waive Clean Air Act requirements in the event of a "significant fuel supply disruption." Yet the meaning of this term is not supplied. Nor are there limits placed on the length of the waiver or on the overall detriment to air quality that could occur. Nothing in the bill would require anyone to either analyze or ameliorate the impacts on air quality in any way, regardless of how easily or inexpensively that could be done.

The bill instructs EPA to give "preference" to particular fuels in approving state implementation plans, but what does it mean to give preference to a particular fuel? The bill also sets a cap on the total number of "fuels" in existence as of June 1, 2004. How many fuels is that? What is the definition of a "fuel"? Would this cap apply to more desirable fuels, such as low-sulfur diesel, or to renewable fuels, such as biodiesel or ethanol? How would this bill affect supply, energy dependence, and price structure in particular regional markets, such as Michigan?

High gas prices are of concern to all, but this bill is not the solution. We should examine the possible relationship between "boutique fuel" requirements and gas prices and determine, through regular committee process, an appropriate solution with input from all interested parties. I would welcome legislation that would lead to cleaner fuels and greater fungibility in the fuel supply.

I urge my colleagues to vote against this bill, and to give the Committee on Energy and Commerce a chance to address these matters properly.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BARTON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4545.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further

proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

INTENT TO ENTER INTO FREE TRADE AGREEMENT WITH BAHRAIN—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 108-193)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, without objection, referred to the Committee on Ways and Means and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

Consistent with section 2105(a)(1)(A) of the Trade Act of 2002, (Public Law 107-210; the "Trade Act"), I am pleased to notify the Congress of my intent to enter into a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the Government of Bahrain.

This agreement will create new opportunities for America's workers, farmers, businesses, and consumers by eliminating barriers in trade with Bahrain. Entering into an FTA with Bahrain will not only strengthen our bilateral ties with this important ally, it will also advance my goal of a U.S.-Middle East Free Trade Area (MEFTA) by 2013.

Consistent with the Trade Act, I am sending this notification at least 90 days in advance of signing the United States-Bahrain FTA. My Administration looks forward to working with the Congress in developing appropriate legislation to approve and implement this free trade agreement.

GEORGE W. BUSH.
THE WHITE HOUSE, June 15, 2004.

NATO NEEDS TO AUGMENT INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ASSISTANCE FORCE IN AFGHANISTAN

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

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, following the stirring address of the President of Afghanistan this morning, this Member rises to address the urgent need for NATO to augment the International Security Assistance Force, or ISAF.

This Member cannot overstate how critical the next few weeks will be for the future of Afghanistan and for the credibility of the North Atlantic Alliance. Unless the NATO allies quickly remedy the grave shortfalls in military personnel and equipment, the NATO mission in Afghanistan faces a real danger of failure. There will be no security for the upcoming elections in the hinterland of Afghanistan.

Actually, this is a crucial failure of will, political will, purely and simply. We are not coming up in other countries with the pledged personnel and equipment. Make no mistake about it,